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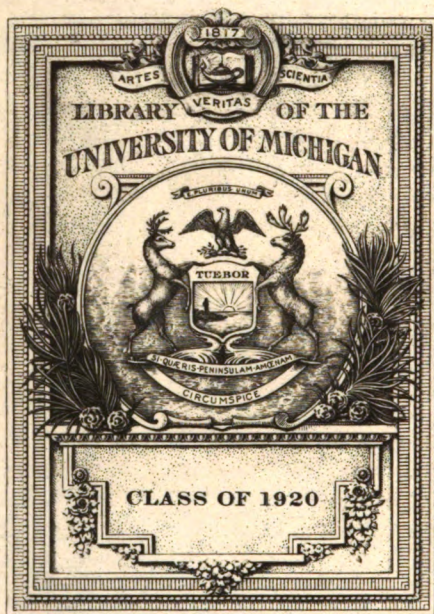
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WITH RIFLEMEN,
SCOUTS, AND
SNIPERS,

From 1914 to 1919

F. M. CRUM



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from the Author.

**WITH RIFLEMEN, SCOUTS,
AND SNIPERS, from 1914
to 1919**

**WITH
RIFLEMEN, SCOUTS, AND
SNIPERS,**

From 1914 to 1919

**By
F. M. CRUM,
Major, King's Royal Rifle Corps**

**OXFORD :
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PREFACE.

THESE notes are put together as a sequel to *With the Mounted Infantry in South Africa*. They may, some day, be of interest to Nephews and Nieces and Boy Scout friends—there are also parts which may help in the training of Scouts. But chiefly, I should feel content if I could but say a word to foster Love of Country and true Comradeship. These, with simple Faith in God and Right, will bring men smiling through the worst of storms.

F. M. C.

LONGWORTH,
April, 1921.

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With Riflemen, Scouts, and Snipers from 1914 to 1919.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRAINING AND TESTING OF THE NEW ARMY.

August 1914, to August 9th, 1915.

War Declared. It had been a strenuous summer of work for the Boy Scout Movement in Scotland.

Their Majesties the King and Queen had just visited us in Stirling, and so we had closed a successful season of scouting and camping and good progress. Then in August, like a thunderclap, came the great war. Personally I was resting when the *Scotsman* of 3rd August reached me. "ULTIMATUM"—who could realise what that meant ! War, modern war, the clashing of armies of millions ; the first great testing of all the recent inventions of science in killing ; the meeting at last with the great Prussian bully, so long threatening and yet so little heeded, so little prepared for ; the more one thought what it all meant, the more impossible it seemed to realise it.

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Waiting for Orders. Then came a trying time of waiting for orders. We did what we could to help with the Scouts. It was still the holiday season, and many of the boys were available. They were used in many directions, as messengers, hospital orderlies, clerks, and in various odd jobs, and splendidly they did whatever was asked of them.

I remember at 10 a.m. on 8th August we got a wire asking for Scouts to help in watching the Coast of Scotland. By 10 p.m. we were able to wire that 24 Coast Guard Stations had been provided, each with a party of one Scout Master and one patrol of Scouts, with tents, blankets and rations complete. What a relief it was to feel you had done something. Everyone had that feeling: "What can we do?" "For any sake, give us something useful to do." But, as a nation, we were quite unorganised for War. Those who were ready and able and anxious to help could not be placed—there was no one to place them—while thousands anxious to help did but add to the confusion because they were neither trained nor prepared. In this respect the Boy Scout stood out, and acted up to his motto of "Be Prepared."

Something to Do. With our Boy Scout House set in order I was itching for army work, but day after day no answer came from the War Office. The War Office was "snowed under" with wires and telegrams.

I went to the Edinburgh local War Office and asked for a temporary job. When it came, it nearly finished me at the start.

Recruiting in the early days of the War. A book could be written on the recruiting scenes which took place those early days of the war. Perhaps one

should be written as a warning. What an orgy of bungling, chaos and waste ! Poor old Army ; of course they got all the blame. What a strain it was, those early days, and how heavily the stress of it fell on those who had foretold trouble and who were least responsible.

At Hamilton Barracks, with its limited staff and accommodation, thousands of would-be soldiers—miners, game-keepers, young men of fashion, hooligans, thousands of men of all sorts, stood outside trying to get inside, and thousands inside, after waiting, kicking their feet for hours in vain, were trying to get outside. A few excellent veteran Quartermasters were working day and night trying to complete utterly unsuitable enlistment forms, while urgent protests from mayors, leading citizens, and others, including a wire direct from the great K. of K. himself, added to the confusion. A climax of chaos was reached when rival Liberal and Conservative agencies, entering into competition with each other, and with the red-tape “proper military authorities” as to which should secure the greatest numbers, fired at us, in our already overcrowded Hamilton Barracks, the halt, the maimed, and the blind, often without any papers at all. It was utterly impossible to provide food, raiment, or shelter, and these splendid fellows, arriving, uplifted with patriotism, love of liberty, and usquebah, not seeing matters

from any red-tape point of view, would storm with indignation because they were not sent by special trains, then and there, as they stood, direct to Belgium, to sweep away the Kaiser, his legions, and every other form of tyranny.

The Boy Scouts One of the sights I never forget was **help with re-** the small parties of big, dour, deter-
cruiting. mined-looking Scots from the pits and iron works of Airdrie and Coat-Bridge, and all that neighbourhood, being marched in at all hours of the day by some Boy Scout on recruiting duty. The Scout would marshall his force, make them "fall in," "number," "tell off," "form fours," then march down and entrain; taking sole charge of railway warrants, certificates, and enlistment papers; he would fetch up at Hamilton and hand over his charge with a cheery smile and a smart salute. The men, stout fellows, though often a bit rough in manner, took it all in good part. There seemed a complete fog in their minds as to military ways, but a very patient putting up with them. "Forming fours" and marching in step were a mystery to them, but they seemed determined to master all such difficulties. They looked on an efficient Scout in uniform as "one who knew." It was enough for the Scout to say, "You'll be late for the Kaiser" to secure better conduct in the ranks. These boys, so self-reliant, keen and intelligent, and yet so free from self-conceit, were of the greatest possible assistance at a time of great confusion and difficulty.

There seemed at one time to be no one available to train these willing men properly, poor fellows ; I often wondered how they "stuck it"—for when at last their papers *had* been made out, what was the next step ? No uniform to replace their varied and sometimes verminous clothing ; no proper sleeping and washing accommodation ; the cooking facilities were only suitable for a fraction of their number ; a sorry crowd they looked on the crowded parade ground, formed up in squads, doggedly marching backwards and forwards, up and down, up and down the Barrack Square, subject to the command of some old "dug-out" private soldier whose repertoire of drill had never in his best days reached far beyond "form fours."

Glorious fellows ! The pity was that those who laughed at Lord Roberts in 1912-13 did not have to join these squads of stalwart Jocks, or share in the strain thrown so unfairly on Regular Officers. Suffice it to say these men became heroes of Scottish Divisions.

August and September. Meanwhile the war was taking its course and in every club and office hung some large map with pins and flags which marked the German advance on Paris and explained the heavy feeling of greatest anxiety at home.

Mercifully the weather was ideal, so the want of shelter and accommodation was not felt as it might have been.

October. As for myself, invitations came in from many directions to do this or that—from General Hutton to help to form a new battalion of

Riflemen ; from the Duke of Montrose to help in forming a new battalion of Argylls ; from brigades and divisions to help on the Staff ; indeed, so many offers came pouring in at this stage that the Staff-Captain thought fit to "pull my leg" with a wire purporting to come from General French himself offering me the choice of any appointment desired.

It is often so in our Army—leave the Army and forget your profession, and then you have every chance of more rapid promotion when war comes.

But I had got my own measure and definite object in view. I knew myself physically to be unfit, as yet, to command, let alone to raise a new battalion ; moreover, after three years' work with Boy Scouts, I had so completely forgotten my old trade that I must first do an apprenticeship under some good brother officer who, knowing my physical limitations, would make allowances.

Aldershot. Accordingly, I was happy indeed **October, 1915.** when, on my birthday, October 12th,

I joined the 8th King's Royal Rifles, under my old friend, Col. H. R. Green, and so became one of Lord Kitchener's "First Hundred Thousand." The story of this splendid battalion in its early days is well told in the Regimental Chronicle of 1915, nor should anyone who wishes to get the atmosphere of enthusiasm of those Service Battalions miss reading Ian Hay's wonderful book, *The First Hundred Thousand*.

To these I will add a few outstanding recollections.

“Kitchener’s Men.” Coming back to soldiering was to me the greatest trial. Men seemed so clumsy after boys ; I seemed out of touch with them. The barriers, too, of rank had become hateful. The punishment of small military offences on the part of civilians—brimful of keenness and ignorance of military ways—often gave me a real disgust for the Army, and yet looking back I do not know that the thing was overdone. The result, anyway, was good. The men seemed all the more proud of being treated as Regulars. They loved their officers, quickly grew into the smartest of riflemen, and inherited, as if by magic, the spirit and best traditions of the 60th Rifles. I hear them still—returning from work singing, “ Here we are ! Here we are ! Here we are again ! ” Great fellows ! How often I left my work and looked out from my window at Malplaquet and wished them God’s blessing.

The Officers. The few Regular Officers we had with us looked at first upon this whole crowd as a rabble. Their one secret wish was to overcome the fate which had left them behind—for their hearts were with their brothers in France. But they stuck it and saw the thing through. As for the Colonel, the wise old “ Verdant,” he just looked steadily ahead, alert in every direction ; no skipper on his bridge in a difficult sea, with storms ahead, could have paced his bridge more cheery and confident.

Another impression I have is—what a noble collection of fine young fellows this 41st Brigade of Riflemen

had : Rugby Internationals and 'Varsity Blues from Oxford and Cambridge, young schoolmasters, lawyers, planters—the pick of the flower of the nation. At times, accustomed to quiet, I used to find it tiring to sit down to tea in a large Mess with a hundred young athletes in the prime of life, for you need to feel young to share such company. What appetites ! I did my bit in the war if only in this that I ran that Mess and encouraged the astonished caterer not to give in.

I have never ceased to admire these young sons of Anak, whose hearts have proved as sound as their limbs.

In another respect I was more fortunate than most. No regiment ever had a better Mess Sergeant than Sergeant Leather, and no officer was ever looked after better or more unselfishly than I was by Rifleman Matthews, and I owe it to these good fellows that I was able to stick it as long as I did.

For a time my prospects of getting to France at all had looked shaky. I never felt well, and got chills easily and soon tired. “If you go,” they said, “you won’t last a fortnight.” But I intended to go. It was not till I got to the health resort of Ypres that I really began to feel well. There can be no doubt that it was thanks to these two good Riflemen and the open air life that the forecast of two weeks in France was extended, to nearly two years.

Nine Months in the Ypres Salient. I now propose to tell my story with the help of extracts from letters written at the time.

How impatient the battalion had

been to get off to France !! For weeks and weeks they had been asking : " When shall we go ? ", and the wise Verdant had chaffed them, answering that it would not be long before they would be asking : " When shall we get back ? "

The first Division of K.'s Army to land in France. At last, on 19th May, 1915, we were off, and I find this last letter written from camp at Aldershot.

" I write this sitting in an easy chair in the sun, surrounded by officers sitting and talking. It is 3 p.m. ; at 3.15 teas ; at 4.15 p.m. my train leaves, and so it is really good-bye.

" The men and young officers, in great spirits at being off, all so heavily loaded, for we are separated from our transport.

" And now, what shall I say—we are off, well off, I feel. A fine battalion, a nice lot of officers, and all well arranged. Regimental bills, etc., all paid, and no hurry or fuss getting off. The future all unknown ; best not to worry about that, but trust for health and strength to do each little bit as it comes along. It will make me happier if I feel you do not worry and are not anxious. Good-bye."

We were now to begin a long nine months in the salient of Ypres, a time during which we lost over 1,200 men. I will try to convey the feeling of those months by means of letters. To me the whole experience of this extraordinary trench-warfare fighting was so novel and difficult, and so different from my galloping Mounted Infantry experience of war in South Africa, that I found it of intense interest.

I do not pretend to be brave, but I can honestly say that my interest and keenness overcame every unpleasant sensation. There were turns of duty when pounded ("crumped" we used to call it) from three sides by Hun 5.9 guns, "whiz-bangs," and "minnies," or trench mortars; poorly supported by our own artillery, which was short of experience and still shorter of ammunition, we would lose from 20 to 30 men a day with nothing to show for it. There were other days when things were quiet enough.

Let these letters take up the story :

MERCKEGHEM, 21.5.15.

Arrival in France. After three nights on the move, we are now established in billets in a beautiful village within hearing of the guns. I am with the Colonel and 'William John' Davis, the Adjutant, at the Schoolhouse, M. Hechinger and his family—nice people. Shared a smallish bed with W.J.D., but we were both so tired that we knew nothing of each other's presence from turning in at 2 a.m. to getting up at 7 a.m. Madame H. brought us coffee, and was much amused because I told her she was an angel and would go to heaven. It is wonderful to see all our carts, etc., transported and in good order. It all seems so simple, this moving of a thousand men and transport and horses and wagons and mules, etc., when you have done it, but there has been a good deal of work in the doing of it.

Every one is very much interested in the "New Army." Did I tell you we were considered the best of the New Army?

MERCCKEGHEM. 23.5.15.

A beautiful village standing high, rather as Longworth does, and distant views. But for the shape of houses and look of natives, one might be in some Berkshire country in June, trees, flowers, green fields, swallows, lanes, cottage gardens, all so beautiful. It is still difficult to realise that one is doing anything more than a pleasure trip with the battalion. Yesterday a route-march through the country, the brigade looking AI. One sadly realises that it cannot long remain so complete and well turned out, but it *starts* well and in good spirits.

All yesterday and last night guns booming some 20-30 miles away. The Schoolmaster tells me he has seldom heard it so continuously. I am sitting under a willow tree, on my Argyll tartan rug, with Laton Frewen, in a green meadow just opposite the school, with a cow and a horse grazing and sniffing round us, the gray mare nibbling at Frewen's legs, as friendly as all the rest of the natives. We have our home papers of 21st, and nothing to worry us for the rest of the morning. I like the people here, population 700, all R.C., and apparently pious, for they all turned out in their Sunday-best and went to the large church not 100 yards from where I sit. The Padre, the Schoolmaster, and the Mayor (a local farmer) all most helpful.

Yesterday I amused myself with the schoolboys, turning them on to play the Scout game of jumping over a string which was circled round with a weight at the end—one sou to the winner and great enthusiasm.

Then the schoolmaster clapped his hands twice ; they fell in and marched into school. It is jolly to see the way our men make friends everywhere. For the Colonel, Adjutant, Quartermaster and Company-Officers there are more worries and duties, but as Second-in-Command I have more leisure and save myself for future use.

12.45 p.m.—Interrupted by gray mare ; jumped on her bare back, and nearly got kicked off.

On return from horse exercise this letter then deals with matters of messing and parcels and comforts and necessities. It is the same with all letters written on service. You will find it in Bismarck's letters of 1870 . . . letters asking his Frau for socks or sausages, or thanking his lady for sending socks or sausages. I will omit all such references, and merely say that while of little interest to readers in later years, the arrival of parcels is one of the most important of all the events on Service. May all those who sent out parcels to the troops receive their reward in proportion to the pleasure they have given. I will not attempt to say more.

NR. CASSEL, *May 27th, 1915.*

We *get nearer the guns* and see more of the troops from the front. These old hands look at us with a critical eye as we pass, the whole Brigade of Riflemen, dirty, dusty, and hot, but in good and soldierly order. The tendency is to think we are mere amateurs, but the most critical has to change his mind as we pass along. We do make our mistakes, of course. The

officers are late packing up their Mess after an early breakfast. The wheel of the Mess cart comes off. Some men fall out from swilling too much water. The Brigade Staff order the Padre to hold his service in two places at the same time, and so on, but, on the whole, we get on wondrous well.

May 31st, 1915.

First experiences of trenches (near Kemmel). I will try to tell you something of my doings and experiences for you will like to hear something first hand, from a pen you know, of the life, the trenches and feelings, both of the old war-horse going into battle, and of the new Kitchener soldier, bobbing or laughing, according to his kind, at the sound of the first bullets, and shells passing well overhead, or occasionally unpleasantly close.

On the whole, I am satisfied both with myself and with what I have seen of the men and young officers. To tell you the real truth, I was not quite sure of myself, for a man's nerve does not improve as he gets older, but, so far, I have felt much as in South Africa. It is like getting up to ride in a steeple-chase, once the flag is down one settles down to ride.

As for the men, it was an interesting study, this first 48 hours in the trenches. With each day's march we had been getting nearer the Hun. Lectures from distinguished Generals and experienced Regimental Officers, practice in putting on respirators, talks en route to men of the Old Army and Territorials, all had given them a feeling that we were getting near the real thing.

All the previous day we had bivouacked in a beautiful green meadow, surrounded by tall poplars, the men keen and fit as could be, awaiting orders lying about in groups watching for the first time occasional aeroplanes passing along above our lines, with puffs of shrapnel bursting all round them, a beautiful sight in the sun against the clouds and blue sky.

At 8 p.m. Guides were sent to show us the way, and off we went. I stood and watched my half battalion go past in fours as it marched out, fit, bronzed, soldierly, well-turned-out, and equipped ; I then came along in rear. As we marched through the town of Wytschaitte, full of troops who crowded round to see the first arrivals of the New Army, I think our men had the feeling a new hand has when he makes his *début* ; a little self-conscious and not quite sure what to do ; how to take the chaff of the older hands, whether to sing, or chaff back, or what to do ? “ Have you come out here to fight or to sleep—with all those blankets ? ” “ Come up here and I’ll show you what I came out for.” This, and such like, I noticed as I came along in rear of my half battalion. Soon after leaving the town an “intense bombardment” (of Ypres) could be seen and heard some five miles to our left ; it made them think, I expect, at least, it did me. After marching three miles we came to our rendezvous, halted and waited for dark. I called up the officers and N.C.O’s and spoke to them on the roadside at the head of the column. I expect they all remember it, not that I said anything special, but it seemed another milestone in our lives ; the flag was down.

We fell in silently and marched to within the danger zone. A little further on eight young officers met our eight platoon commanders and led them off into the dark each to his own particular stance ; and here I must leave them, for I myself was attached to the Colonel and Adjutant of the Sherwood Foresters, Territorials, and spent some hours learning the system and seeing all the arrangements for issuing rations and stores, a confusing business for a beginner.

Our Headquarters are in a doctor's house ; a shell through the top story has smashed his best bedrooms and a vine-house below, but the garden outside is still lovely with roses, rhododendrons and azaleas, and the nightingales have been singing all night. Up again at 5 a.m. seeing how the Adjutant ran his show, then out to the trenches.

First sight of Trenches. It is really a very strange experience, something *quite* new to me. You leave Headquarters, where all is comparatively peaceful, say good-bye to comfortable rooms and baths and gardens, and start down a long, winding communication trench. You see distant trenches in various directions, German or British ? At first one has no idea ; bullets come pinging over the top, occasionally one is advised to stoop to avoid some dangerous point. After a walk of over a mile one comes to some " dug-out." (You have seen them in the *Daily Mirror*), then one is lost in a maze of trenches, all numbered and lettered and known to the particular moles who live in them. You see men resting and hear them snoring in holes which no tramp would say 'thank

you' for—even on a wet day. These men have been up all night, improving the parapets and entanglements, perhaps, often under fire, or perhaps on sentry. They are as happy and sound asleep as in any four-poster bed. Or you see them cooking in their billies over smokeless braziers, or watching the German trenches through periscopes. You squash past them ; there is little room to pass, "Gangway there," says some good fellow, and they all make room somehow. You dodge round traverses and under traverses, at some points the Hun is only 30 yards off, at others 300, and all day long you hardly ever see a sign of Fritz, in spite of a continual pinging and smack and whack of bullets passing mostly harmlessly overhead or into sandbags. With experience men grow more artful and the danger is reduced. But I can't go on with the endless impressions, the novelty of it all, and the interest—it is hopeless to try. One impression stands out—I marvel at the men who have stuck it right through the winter ; it is marvellous, and they are heroes.

DICKEBUSH, *June 10th.*

For the last four days we have been in the trenches. I find it hard work for all ranks, myself included—endless reports, telephone messages and organising of rations, water, trench store parties, etc., all a bit tricky to arrange at first. You would be surprised what a lot there is in it all and what a difference it makes if there is a good system and good men in charge. We finish our turn to-day, and then have four days comparative rest in reserve. We have lost

a few men—I am afraid we must count on that each day, especially with new hands ; they are fine fellows, and one feels very sad that it should be so, while we are only in trenches and have little to show for it.

I write this from a bivouac under willows in a meadow, 8 p.m., getting dusk.

Last night it was a very dirty farm with a most unsanitary farmyard, manure, pigs, roosters, refuse, flies, rats, etc. You never know your luck—Chateau or pigsty—we take it as it comes and are quite happy and comfortable.

IN SUPPORT. *June 12th, 1915.* 12 NOON.

We are back in support to our 7th Battalion, which is taking its turn in the trenches ; it has been a nomadic life, so far, not giving one time to get to know one place properly before we move off ; still it is shaking us down to being more handy in moving, taking over billets, trenches, etc. It is sad how some-one drops out each day, mostly slightly wounded, but sometimes killed, more often by stray bullets at night which catch relieving or carrying parties bringing up stores. The men and young officers are splendid. Yesterday they had a real taste of mud, and one could realise what winter work in the trenches must have been. Thunder showers had filled the trenches and turned the clay to thick coffee-coloured mud, daubing the men from head to foot a real khaki (mud) colour, clogging rifles, and doubling the labour of carrying water, coke, ammunition, and rations up to the

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trenches. With us at Battalion Headquarters it is more a work of organising parties, collating reports and returns of requirements, and sending out telephone messages and orders. It is hard work, too, often keeping one up all night, and so tied down that one has little time to visit the trenches.

By day one lies low, out of sight of aeroplanes. . . . At night along the hundreds of miles on both sides, the waggons come up to various bases, with stores, rations and water, with mails and trench materials and what not. Here parties are organised and carry each load (which has been carefully weighed and labelled) down the long communication trenches, or, if good going, across the open ; each party to its own trench, with guides who know the way through the maze of trenches, all in silence and without lights. Stray shots go singing over the carriers' heads, or ricocheting off the ground with a buzzing, disconcerting sound, or strike with a loud whack some point which feels over near . . . Occasionally some poor fellow gets hit, and arrangements have to be made for seeing to him and his load . . . The stretcher-bearers and doctor take up the duties they have been preparing for these many months. All the time, especially to young troops, what sounds like a great battle of musketry is raging along the front line . . . constant flares go up, mostly they come from German trenches, and light up the ground. We have now sampled various kinds of shelling, "whiz-bangs," 5-in. mortars, "crumps," hand and rifle grenades—all beastly—each in its own way, but not always as bad as they seem.

IN RESERVE AT SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES.

June 19th.

But for the censor, I could sit down and write you a long account of the battle we saw from a distance. I see the papers call it a success ; well, it was not a reverse, so I will not contradict them, but what I do feel is that, as far as our two brigades were concerned, we would have been better employed where we now are, learning to throw bombs ; for beyond losing stray men from chance shells and being brought up where troops were already overcrowded, we did nothing. At one time we were in a really warm corner, in the open, close to our own long-range guns and coming in for all the Hun counter-battery shells ; the wonder was that we only had some half-dozen wounded. Personally, when I hear a shell whizzing over, I have enough experience to know, roughly, if it is coming my way or not, or to know whether the " bang " comes from our guns being discharged, or from a German " crump," but to a beginner, the noise and confusion and ignorance of what is going on are trying. We had three warm times, and each time the men did well, too casual in many cases, having to be ordered away from their cooking or washing operations. It may even be amusing to a young soldier, but the man who has been under a real pounding takes it in a very different way. Our men, if allowed, rush out and dig up the shell splinters or fuses as souvenirs. The nerve-tried veteran prefers the shade of a dug-out. Some poor chaps I have seen, who have had too long a spell, are quite undone, and needing a change which appar-

ently they cannot be spared to get. Time in its course will certainly make our young men more respectful ; I trust they may not get an overdose, like some have had. On our way up, we met German prisoners being escorted to the rear, glad, no doubt, for the time to be out of the inferno, but it would be foolish to estimate the German morale by such as these ; we are up against a great and patriotic nation, organised in arms and all that leads to success in arms ; we have got to realise that no one else is going to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for us. We have left it late, very late, but not too late if we really wake up, but I do not see how you can organise the nation without the power to say " you must." The papers have not been cheering of late. Poor Russia, the great " steam-roller," is still in the reversing gear, and we ourselves stuck up, instead of making the much-looked-for advance.

At such times perhaps one hears of mistakes of the Staff, and experiences first hand marchings, counter marchings, alarums and avoidable losses, with nothing to show for them. Then you see a man tried ; does he walk about grumbling and crabbing the Staff ? or saying he sees no end to this war ?, etc., etc., all in a whining voice, with a long face ; or does he buck up all the more and help to buck up all around him ? You never know your man till you see him on Service ; it is only then you know whether he is a real Scout and a real Christian, or only one who bucks up when the sun is shining ! I was sad to see Jock Wood, my old Eton, Sandhurst and South African friend, had gone. In my rooms at Stirling I have a Sandhurst

group of old Etonians—Boden, Gough, Blundell, Southey, Egerton, Paley, Gosling and others, all gone ; truly, this Kaiser has much to answer for.

FROM RAMPARTS IN YPRES. *June 27th.*

. . . The life of a battalion in support is not always as restful as might be supposed ; indeed, many prefer to be in the firing line trenches, where they have their regular job and more or less regular hours of duty and sleep. It is a wonderful sight to see the men who have been on duty, curled up and snoring, in some little hollow excavated in the side of the trench, perhaps alone, perhaps sardined together, covered up in greatcoats, in spite of the heat, to keep off the flies—and dead to the world, in a sleep which many at home might envy. Or, you pass them cooking in a tin held over a brazier made of a biscuit tin pierced with holes and filled with charcoal. Or you see them shaving with a fragment of looking-glass, or washing with only a canteen of dirty water. It is a strange life.

The line in these parts is the German line recently captured and converted to face the other way, a scene of much hard fighting. You find signs of confusion still uncleared up—rifles, equipment, bayonets, kit-bags of both sides, khaki or cowhide, German iron loopholes and coloured sandbags, and sad sights of still unburied men . . . For some time yet both sides will be content to “ consolidate their positions ” . . . In shelling the Hun still throws a dozen to one of ours, so we are glad to read of all Lloyd George is doing.

RAMPARTS AT YPRES. *Sunday, July 4th.*

Another Sunday nearly past. I have just come out of the adjoining vault where our Padre—Green Wilkinson—had “gathered two or three (or as many shock-headed riflemen as there was room for) together.” He is a fine chap, and does a lot of good among the men. Last night at 10 p.m. we were burying three good fellows on the ramparts who had been killed at 4.30 p.m. the same day by a shell which landed where they were making tea in a house ; twelve were hit. The funeral over, I walked through the town with the Padre, who was bound for the Hospital. To-day has been a glorious summer day ; I went up to the trenches with ten men, trenches blown away in places, so one has to “watch it” crossing exposed places. On the way home the Hun started shelling, so I left the trenches and scouted my party round across country. They thought it more exciting than it really was, and thanked me for safe conduct on return. If you watch the habits of the German gunners it assists. We carried home in triumph a heavy iron German loophole plate, which we are having copied (for we are behindhand in these matters). On return an AI wash and tea, then at 6 p.m., as I said, a nice little service. I am so fond of our riflemen and only wish the duties of Second in Command brought one more into touch with them than it does, for to me the chief pleasure of soldiering always was—the men themselves.

POPPERINGHE. *July 8th, 1915.*

I have come on in advance to fix up the billets for the battalion, which is to have a week's rest after its spell of duty in the "Lucky Horse Shoe." It all looks very comfortable comparatively, and all seems fixed up, so I can now sit down and write you a line with a clear conscience. Also, if you were to meet me you would want some explanation as to why I wear a bandage round my jaw, for a bit of shrapnel got in my way yesterday. I had been round the trenches with Laton Frewen and one of the Scouts (Rifleman Sims, an old Boy Scout), and on our way back they suddenly planted four shells near us. It was all very sudden, and I could hardly believe a splinter had hit me. We soon patched it up, and on arrival at Headquarters the doctor put two stitches in and bandaged it. This morning I was injected for tetanus.

Our brigade is very glad to get a rest ; for ten days they have had a trying time, but have done jolly well, and improved enormously, building up the trenches and accounting for a good many Huns who thought fit to despise the marksmanship and enterprise of the New Army.

July 10th.

Many thanks for parcels and for all you do. I feel like the young swallow I was watching this morning, always asking for more. There were five or six nests in the shed which we use as our temporary "Orderly room," and in each nest two or three young swallows bullying and shouting to their parents as they con-

stantly flew in and out over the Colonel's head while he was dispensing justice to defaulters and disposing of other business.

There is a jolly little garden with roses, wisteria, clematis and asters in front of our dining-room, where we have a jolly party. The Mess is all in good order now, and I have it arranged so that anyone could take up the reins and carry on without difficulty. Leather is now our Mess Sergeant and does A1. We live on 1 franc a day for local produce, potatoes, green peas, French wines, eggs and milk occasionally, plus rations and various parcels. The officers' servants are a good lot, all pulling together, as the French schoolmaster said. He was struck by the friendly relations between the officers and their men. He had himself turned socialist after his army experiences. Well, we are having a good rest here, and shall be ready to face the Kaiser if he does make his threatened push on Calais. The Germans have a way of spreading such rumours when it suits them. I expect our Generals know ; anyway, it is no use worrying if the Huns do try a Hindenburg battue with phalanxes and 2,000 trains of ammunition. We will not retire as in Russia ; there is nowhere to manoeuvre to ; we shall have our backs to the wall. Let them come on with their clouds of gas ; they will find us here with smoke-helmets on, waiting to receive them. Let them try ; we will get it over all the sooner. We shall win, and what else matters ?

Our men have just driven off (7 p.m.) in 25 gray-painted London motor omnibuses ; they are off for

a night's digging somewhere in Flanders. Your Boy Scouts starting out on a Whit Monday holiday could not be cheerier. "Hullo, hullo, here we are again," and all their old Aldershot favourite songs. They have had three days' rest, hot baths and clean clothes, and are full of spirits after their trying time in the trenches. I feel very fond and very proud of them. They have been put to a pretty severe test (34 casualties in one Company alone), and they have done right well. They will do well if put to still greater trials. Hooray for them all ! We are getting up a concert for to-morrow night. And now, halt ! Enough.

July 15th, 1915.

It does me good to see people waking up at home, and I feel sure the tide will turn soon, but, by Jove, old John Bull *had* grown self-satisfied. Almost one began to dislike him.

July 21st, 1915.

Busy winding up and arranging Mess, Institutes, maps of new trenches, kit, etc., for we move to-morrow to trenches where Kenneth Campbell is lying (Zouave Wood). We expect to be "in" a week, then "half in" for a week, then "in" a week, then "right out" in support.

So we shall be doing our bit and relieving hard-pressed battalions, which is more satisfactory than doing nothing. Things have been lively of late at the front. To-day we had sports, including pony-jumping—my pony did all right. Last night I dined with Nugent ; he keeps well and is always a very good

friend, but he seems tired at times, and, like the rest of us, is not so young as in South African or Indian days.

Sat., 6th Aug., 1915.

German attack on Hooge. July 30th, 1915. On the night of 29-30th July, we had just finished a hard week in difficult trenches at Hooge. I had devoted the whole of my thoughts to the Snipers, and we had got a fine system going. That night we were relieved by our 7th Battalion. I handed them a full report with maps and plans and pictures showing all the German trenches and loopholes and details of their habits, dangerous points, etc., etc. The whole of the previous day I had been watching Germans with a good telescope, and Corpl. Evans and I had even drawn a bead with telescopic rifle on three Germans 700 yards away from the very hill which they captured next morning by using liquid flame. The whole battalion had done well and was tired out, and glad to be returning. We got off about 2 a.m., having completed the relief satisfactorily (this is by no means a simple operation). I walked back to our Rest Camp 6 miles off, with Bowen and his machine gunners; got into a farmhouse and slept like a log for an hour till about 4.30 when we heard a terrific bombardment, and got a message very soon that we were to go back at once and reinforce our 7th Battalion and the 8th Rifle Brigade, who had been attacked and were hard-pressed. Two of our Companies were in the ramparts of Ypres. I went off with two Com-

panies, while the Colonel collected the other two. Now, while an attack is going on, the artillery make what is called a "curtain of fire" to prevent any reinforcements coming up. This is exactly what the Germans were doing, raining shells of all kinds over the 6 miles interval between us and our 7th Battalion. However, our advance was lucky and well-timed. We went a roundabout route, away from the usual lines, and I arrived about 7, and reported to Colonel Ronnie McLachlan with two companies intact. (It was here we lost our Dr. Hawkes, killed by a shell; his loss proved a very serious one before the end of the day.) I found Ronnie McLachlan at what we will call the S. end of Kenneth's Wood (Kenneth Campbell, 9th Argylls, killed in Zouave Wood). Here very few shells were arriving, but at the far end, which was held by R.B., huge "crumps" and explosions were taking place. It was a difficult position for a Battalion Commander to be in. He knew two Companies a mile away had been attacked and overcome. Wounded and messengers kept pouring in. All his Company Officers seemed to be getting wounded, and he had to send younger ones to replace them, and as fast as sent they in turn seemed to get hit. The situation in the thick wood was obscure; it was important to know what was going on, so together we went to the further edge of the wood. The real attack had been 1,000 yards away, but even here casualties were constantly taking place; men lying wounded or dying everywhere . . . one officer dead . . . and wounded and sometimes very shaken men returning back to

the Dressing Station. It was as trying a time as any Colonel could wish to have, and I felt so much for Ronnie McLachlan, who is an old Eton and Sandhurst friend of mine. There was nothing to do but find out what was on, and report to the General (Nugent), who was not very far off. About 10 a.m. the order came for me to join our other two Companies, who were now with our 7th Battalion, in the woods which I knew so well, having been there all the previous week.

About 11 a.m., 30th, the order came for us to counter-attack; at 2 the guns would bombard; at 2.45 we were to attack. The actual scheme only reached us about 1.30 p.m., and I well remember the occasion. Our old-established firm—the Colonel, Adjutant, 4 Company Officers and myself—how often we seven had collected for “pow-wows” over sham fights—Aldershot, Hindhead, Borden, etc., and now we were in for a real attack, and one in which I for one honestly felt there was no fraction of a chance of success; 800 to 900 yards across the open, up a glacis held by trenches, with no covering guns, and under an unholy bombardment from every kind of German gun, fired from every side into our salient. Barely time to say a word to their Companies, our four good Company Officers got to their stations. It certainly seemed a case of good-bye to this world, but I only felt a kind of regret that it was not a show more likely to succeed. I wrote you a line from my notebook, then looked through some notes I have on “attack.” One after another I noted our omissions.

and errors. It made it harder because I knew our Brigadier had personally protested, and yet had received peremptory orders to counter-attack. Even if our men had taken the hill, how could they face the terrific "crumping" which always follows and the inevitable counter-attack? Our good men, 36 hours without food or water, or rest, and no training with bombs and rifle-grenades.

But I kept all such thoughts to myself. I will say this ; we *did* " keep smiling." We went at it, Officers and all, as cheerfully and as gallantly as ever at Talana or Delhi, or any other historic Rifleman's charge. But the odds were too great. Our 45 minutes bombardment had done nothing to save us. At least four or five hours *scientific* bombardment was needed. The Germans had done splendidly. Without losing a minute they had brought machine guns up to the captured positions, so that when we advanced there must have been from six to ten machine guns. There was not a square inch of dead ground. The 7th Battalion led the attack ; then came our four Companies, the Colonel keeping two of them, and me myself in reserve. My chief job was to keep in rear and try and see what was going on. I crawled out to the edge of a wood and saw what I could, and kept telling the Colonel that I could only see men being shot down, and could see no sign of progress of the attack. The great difficulty, as always, was to know what was going on. Poor William John Davis was sent up to find out. I found him later, lying as he had fallen, shot dead in a path near the edge of the wood. The fire of the

Maxims was terrific ; nothing could live in the open or near the edge of the wood. Few got far beyond the wood, and the wood itself was an inferno. From East, from North and from South, every kind of gun showered down shells and explosions. Away to our left, from what we will call Kenneth's Wood, the Rifle Brigade met the same fate as ourselves. At about 3.30 Colonel Green, seeing no sort of hope of success, decided not to send in his reserves and to report that the attack was stuck up. Again I believe the Superior Authority from some spot miles away wished to attack again, but Oliver Nugent protested again, as also another Brigadier, and so further losses were for the time averted.

To succeed, a counter-attack must be *instantaneous*. You can't give an enemy twelve hours to defend himself and then attack him in a minority with tired troops. On the other hand, if you can't do it at once, you may have to attack, and then it is a case of clear-thinking, careful reconnaissance and planning, superior numbers, every man his objective, fit and worked up to enthusiasm ; then, if well led, an attack succeeds, but . . . Well, well, I will not join in the fashionable pursuit of Regimental Officers—slanging the Staff.

To go on . . . the attack failed. We lost in our battalion 11 officers, 176 N.C.O's and men. Our 7th Battalion and 7th Rifle Brigade lost more than we did, while poor old Ronnie McLachlan's battalion—8th Rifle Brigade—lost all but 4 officers and most of its men. Darkness found us digging a new line as best we could in the confusion of woods, then new troops

came in and helped. By 1 a.m. we had sent two Companies home, and were just thinking of getting the other two off when we heard a terrific outburst of rifle fire. I ran out from the dug-out. The whole sky was lit up with flare lights, then a wall of flame, which I knew must be liquid flame again ; then two red lights, then every gun on each side and Maxims and bombs. What a row ! We thought the Germans had followed up their success and were attacking, and indeed there was little to stop them pushing through to Ypres. I ran to where Capt. Moor's company was. It had no officers left. I got them together and lined them out beside a Maxim gun . . . catching hold of each single man and bellowing in his ear where to go and not to fire without orders from me. The Maxim we turned on to one place we knew to be safe. We lay there and waited, a wonderful sight and noise ; the Colonel and I, each with a rifle, expecting every moment to be engaged, hand to hand. A terrific night battle raged. At one time it looked as if they had worked right round us, and we were cut off. One man went fighting mad from the excitement and had to be held down. For an hour nearly the battle raged. We lay under cover and watched and watched, ready to stick it and stand a charge, or charge ourselves. Then daylight began to appear, the firing died down ; messengers came in from various parts that all was well. It had been a false alarm on both sides ; the Germans even pouring liquid flame on our imagined charge at their trenches.

I think the thing that I felt most was the terrible

plight of our wounded. It was impossible to rescue those beyond under fire from the Germans; any attempts were fatal. Usually it was the most gallant and foremost in the charge who suffered most. Then when they got back to the wood, no proper arrangements had been made. One doctor and six stretcher-bearers were all that were available for over 500 cases in our two battalions alone. It was impossible to get Ambulance waggons up so far, and only by night could they come within a mile. So there these poor fellows had to lie, starved, cold, no proper attendance, groaning and dying, full of pluck, splendid fellows. I went round at intervals all night, with water-bottle, flask, cigarettes, chocolate, and did what I could. They were grand, a word here and there seemed a help. I had learned in Natal what it meant to be left wounded and waiting on the field.

And now I must close and send this scribble as it is. Verdant and I walked back to Ypres, called on the Divisional General and gave him our account of it all. He is an old Rifleman and a good friend. A lift in the Divisional motor soon put us down, two dirty-looking tramps, in our new camp, then breakfast, then a thundering good sleep.

Sunday, August 1st, found me recouped enough to take a distinguished General (General Congreve, V.C., and Colonel Boyd, D.C.M., D.S.O.) round and show him the ground I now knew so well; made very good friends and spent a very interesting day.

From Monday 2nd, if I ever take up the narrative, it

would require a book by itself to carry me on to my return here yesterday, Friday 5th. How, just when we were hoping to reorganise and rest after our troubles we were sent back to take up an important part of the trenches ; how we went out and stuck four very hot days, losing another 120 men in this fatal salient ; how the men stuck it. Of all the difficulties of carrying on with hardly any officers left ; of how splendid the Colonel, Verdant Green, was, and of our " find " of a new Adjutant, Maxe Cullinan, who turned out A1 ; of the new German trench mortar, 210 lbs. of strongest explosive ; of the urgent messages to our gunners giving its locality ; of wires cut by shells just when most needed ; of men buried alive in debris, or shaken for life by the explosion ; of wounded men having to wait all day in trenches before it was possible to attend to them ; of night attacks and false alarms ; of German aeroplanes hovering over us ; of a hundred and one other things, I have no time or energy to write of. Many a man has broken down from the strain alone. To me it is granted so far to keep better than usual, and for this I am very thankful.

After Instead of getting the rest which the brigade
Hooqe. was entitled to, our battalion was lent to another brigade to make up their casualties.

The 6th Division; under General Congreve, was now preparing to counter-attack, and evidently the Hun suspected that something was coming, for the days that followed between the Hooqe affair and General Congreve's attack were as lively as any seen in the salient, and came very hard on our poor chaps,

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crowded as they were those early days of the war, in the advance and well registered trenches. Our Battalion Headquarters were on an exposed knoll just off a trench called "Union Street." The Companies of the front line held trenches recently taken from the Hun, with many detachments isolated by day and very much exposed to view and shell fire. Two Companies under Charley Seymour and Laton Frewen held a salient within the salient, and came in for a special dusting. I well remember the "crumping" Headquarters came in for too. It went on day and night for four days

There were three small dug-outs. In one were Sergeant Leather and the Orderlies and Office Staff.

In another were the Signallers, whose telephone lines, when not smashed up (or "gone dish" as they called it) kept sending message after message of fresh casualties.

In the centre dug-out Verdant, Cullinan and myself crowded and huddled up with papers and maps and orders and log-books, squatted on the floor. There was hardly room to sit upright or lie full-length. This was the bridge of the ship in the storm.

"Wanted on the telephone, Sir."

"I say . . . can't you stop our own . . . gunners murdering us?" "Another six of my best men and Lieut. — gone up!"

This was a type of message received for the Hun was firing from the Comines Canal, 6 miles off to our right rear, and hard it was to feel yourself shelled from behind as well as pounded from flank and front.

There was nothing for it, but to "stick it"—but I remember whole days when we talked in a low, strange, far-away voice, as if it were part of a dream. We took it in turns to go down to the lines and see what was doing. The Colonel, who had been put in command of an extra battalion, scattered away to our right, would sally forth with one of his gallant Riflemen Orderlies, and one never knew if one would see him again, for his venturesome spirit took him crawling right up to diagnose the situation and visit isolated parties of men who had been cut off for days, and were sticking it out among the ruins of Hooge.

I remember the shambles of dead and the debris of discarded equipment and shattered timber and sandbags, and amid this scene of ruined trenches and noise, our own wounded men patiently awaiting darkness before it was possible to get them back to the doctors.

Here was a poor fellow with his thigh broken, bleeding and dangling. It had taken him half the day to reach thus far, no very heartening sight to his comrades as he dragged himself painfully along. Poor fellow, I can see him, standing and leaning for a space against a dug-out. I offered him a drop from my flask, but unlike some of my fellow-countrymen, he shook his head and thanked me saying he was a tee-totaler.

That night I offered to relieve Blane, who had had no sleep for nights. It was the kind of night one remembers. The moon was shining, and for the time being there was a lull in the storm. Rations, stores, bombs were being brought up and any repairs possible

were being made to wiring and parapets. The stretcher-bearers were doing noble work, and all were making the most of the short spell of quiet and darkness.

I visited every sentry along the line ; not the usual official " Officers' rounds " inspection, with its sentry challenge and shout of " Halt ! " followed by a still louder " Pass and all's well." I was alone and on my own, with a subaltern left in charge who knew of my movements ; I stood for some time beside each man on his firing step and joined him in his watch, listening hard. (I have always maintained that listening is a high art and insufficiently taught.) We would listen, then whisper, then listen again, and so the time would pass as we searched for and interpreted sounds in the space beyond. All seemed well. On occasions such as these, good Scouts should get right home and in touch with each other. Give this good fellow " a pat on the back " ; let him know he has played a man's part these anxious days ; make him feel that his comrades depend on his promptness. You may even whisper a joke, or a word about home. It may go a long way in making a man, and will help to hold the Hun at bay better, perhaps, than the fiercest challenge.

Undoubtedly during those strenuous days, all seemed to point to a coming attack, but, had it come, the Riflemen were there.

The limit of endurance. On the fifth day, while the Colonel was away on one of his venturesome trips, using my discretion, I took upon myself to do a thing he never would have done.

I wrote to the Brigadier, who knew me well, and told him straight that those glorious men were being tried too high, and that a week of such hell on the top of Hooge, and the ten days' 'tour' before that, was unwise and unfair if other troops were available. When Verdant got back, I told him what I had done, and he did not disapprove, for he knew it was true. It was not long before the Brigadier came up himself, and that night we were relieved.

Throughout these days my mind seemed specially clear. At Talana, Baakenlaagte, Hooge, and in any tight corner, I have found myself helped in this way. It may be psychology, anyway, it is a thing to be very thankful for.

And now with notes from two letters written at this time, let me close this period of fighting.

RAILWAY WOOD. *Aug. 5th, 1915.*

I write this from Bernard Paget's dug-out, waiting to hear that "the Relief has been completed." We have had a very hard time; I have been living from hand to mouth and quite unable to think of anything but the show on hand. I have hardly slept for days and am very tired, but hope to get a rest now for a bit. I send this as I know you will be anxious. Good-night and love. Your v. sleepy son, F.M.C.

WATOU. *Aug. 9th, 1915.*

Ref. my account of Hooge, several wrong rumours got about, and one would like all to know the truth. No men and no officers, no Riflemen ever did, or could, do more.

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We have had three or four days of real rest here, and the men are far better, but this is our first time out of range of German guns since June, and the time is all too short. We are off again to new trenches to-night. It is a great strain, and no one could stand such a time indefinitely. Artillery and explosions play an altogether new part in war; the greatest bravery and tactical skill may be useless. This is becoming recognised, but one must see it first hand to realise it. We learn from the reports that the Hun has a horror of Hooze. It only remains for all to buck up and face facts. Shells and men we must have; a courageous spirit and always a deaf ear to all pessimism.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE SALIENT.

August, 1915, to February, 1916.

For the next few months the Battalion was kept busy with trench warfare. There were interruptions in the shape of attacks in September and December, and a short leave home, but during most of the time I was serving my apprenticeship as a Sniper in the Salient, and here perhaps a few words on sniping may be of interest.

Sniping. It was in Sanctuary Wood in July that I first made my debut as a sniping enthusiast for it was here that we started with the band of picked Riflemen whom we had trained as Scouts and Snipers at Aldershot.

A day spent in the company of a splendid fellow, Sergt. Forbes, 4th Gordons, started me off on right lines. He was an Aberdeen divinity student, a book has been written about him. I will only say here that this day spent with him was one of the best days I spent during the war.

From that time onward I was sniping mad. Sniping was then in its infancy. The Hun had got the start, and was "top dog" nine times out of ten, while we depended for our superiority in this matter on the

chance of there being in any Battalion some enthusiast who was sufficiently fortunate to win the support of his Battalion or Brigade Commander.

Its Early Days. It was not till later that it began to rain telescopic rifles, so fast that Major Sclater's and Hesketh-Prichard's Schools could not keep pace with instruction in how to use them. In those days we enthusiasts spent large fortunes privately on telescopes, periscopes, elephant guns, etc. We were the pioneers who proved the need of some sound system and of official sympathy ; and, as is always the case with pioneers, it was an uphill and expensive task.

In my case, with Verdant Green as a warm supporter and the various Brigadiers, who succeeded each other only too quickly, all in our favour, I was more fortunate than most.

Good Men. What men they were ! Some two dozen picked Riflemen. The names that occur to me are : Scott, Evans, Otterwell, Liddiard, Sherry, Hicks, Riches, and others ; Corporals then, but later mostly commissioned officers, and to-day—where are they ? Every one of them killed, wounded, or missing ! Names mean nothing to you who read ; only a Sniping Officer can understand.

In India my sporting days with " Juttu " and other Shikaris, had taught me much . . . but little compared to the days I spent doing Shikari myself to this loyal band of marksmen.

Having lost my skill with the rifle, I was always accompanied in prowling about by one of the best of the band.

There were those who spoke of this sniping as "sport," but to me it was not sport ; it was part of the great crusade in which I was glad to find some useful opening.

The doctrine of Hate. There were also those who preached the doctrine of "Hate," but wiser men preferred to leave the "Hymn of Hate" to the Hun.

And yet, though it may seem strange reading and ill to reconcile with Christian teaching, there was a time when it became an urgent necessity to preach the duty of *killing*.

What was the average British soldier but a good-natured civilian dressed in khaki? Nor was his trench-warfare existence by any means calculated to promote a fighting spirit. Crouching all day underground, he would only emerge at night to play the part of a beast of burden—no wonder if he little realised that in the Hun, so seldom seen, he was right up against a foe filled up to the brim with hate, and trained *to kill* by masters in the art of war.

The Development of Sniping. As a science the art of Sniping grew steadily, thanks to the efforts of a limited number of experts, who would not be denied. Gradually, from their constant watching, Snipers grew into expert observers, and often the reports they sent in were of the greatest value. This led to their being specially trained, and employed, and worked on a system, as Observers. Later, their enterprise leading to successful work on patrol at night, they became instrumental in bringing

about a scientific training in night work which eventually reduced the terrible wastage of men, sent out with every possible blunder of management, to reconnoitre and stalk the Hun in the dark.

Science and System Required. With regard to actual sniping, some of the tales in a book called *Sniper Jackson*, by Frederick Sleath give some idea.

Wherever the Hun was scientifically tackled we beat him every time, and more than once we left trenches, which we had taken over with an evil reputation for casualties, without a single mishap from hostile snipers. It was sometimes enough to kill a single really troublesome Hun sniper to secure complete moral superiority. In one sector, I remember, on our arrival, it was unsafe to show your little finger. When we came away, three weeks later, I saw one of our men coolly lathering his face in full view as he did his morning shave.

Letters from the Salient.

Aug. 29th, 1915.

Frewen is back from leave already, and the Colonel due to-morrow. Seymour and two or three N.C.O's go next, and then I hope to follow. I am sending you some papers to help in the training of Snipers at home; one had so little idea oneself as to what was wanted that I hope this may help. I have got on all right in command of the battalion, but as you know, on grounds of health, I prefer the post of Second-in-Command. We got up a successful concert last night, and I said a word and gave out that two Riflemen had won the D.C.M. for doing well at Zouave Wood, which was a great encouragement. General Plumer,

who saw us the day before, was very nice. Also a message from the King, so it was not difficult to buck them up ; not that they need it, but it is a mistake to forget the pat on the back.

We have 350 new men to replace casualties, a good lot and keen to do their bit.

It is difficult to understand the Welsh miners going on strike except that to talk, still more to teach patriotism and unselfishness, has been looked upon as a mild form of madness by the average Britisher for several self-satisfied generations. As for saying " You must " to the " free Briton "—of course that was rank " militarism." If only Baden Powell had been able to start his movement of self-discipline and citizenship earlier ! However, we win in the end, and that is the chief point ; though what it has still to cost us in the pick of our manhood one hesitates to think of.

My letter to the Scouts in Stirling has drawn several jolly letters from boys doing their bit, recruiting, working at munitions, hospitals, coast watching, etc., and counting the days till they can shoulder a rifle.

LETTER TO SCOUTS.

Aug. 24th, '15.

MY DEAR SCOUTS,—My old friend " Delta " writes me that it is time I sent a line to you to tell of our doings in Flanders, as well as to help him with Scout Notes now that he is so busy with public work.

Sometimes it seems to me years since we came out, though it is only three months. The days pass quickly enough ; there is always something doing, but most of us have felt a longing for the summer and autumn at home which makes the time seem long.

We are all old soldiers now, having been engaged in two or three battles—besides all the trench fighting—one of them as big a battle as any in the South African War, and yet in this great conflict it will scarcely be noticed. In the small hours of the morning the Germans come up to our trenches, armed with “liquid flame” carriers, which, to look at, resemble portable fire extinguishers. On the tap being turned on, and the nozzle pointed at you, it shoots a flame 60 yards and burns everything. It is, however, a dangerous weapon for both sides, for one of a number of prisoners we captured the other day had both his hands burned using the instrument.

Then, besides the fire, they use gas, as you know, which comes drifting along in clouds. Every man now has a smoke helmet in his pocket and has to BE PREPARED to put it on the moment the order is given. So far, luckily, the wind has been from the West and we have not been troubled. Then there are all sorts of ways of throwing shells and bombs at us, resulting in great explosions like a mining accident, or an earthquake, not to speak of lesser explosions, sudden and sharp, which catch you before you have time to get into your “rabbit burrow,” in other words, your “dug-out.” Well, we “stick it” all and keep smiling, with our rifles and bayonets ready, while our guns answer back to the Germans, the missiles whizzing over our heads to any distance from 1 to 8 miles. Our men are splendid and, like good Scouts, they do not get downhearted. Indeed their pluck quite astonishes even myself, who know them. The

other day, on getting back to camp, tired out, having been fighting 48 hours without food or water or rest, we found we had lost a quarter of our strength—10 officers and 250 men. After a few days' rest the order was given to start back again into the firing line. Well, of course, we should have liked a longer rest, but I never heard one word of grousing; no, the men marched straight back to the sound of the guns, singing all the way. So you see I was right when I told you Kitchener's army would do well.

The strain of the war is very trying, and often some poor fellow gets tired out or shaken so that he is no more use for a bit. I therefore hope that all likely men at home are getting ready to come and do their share. We have got to win this war, and to do it means straining every nerve. The Germans are good soldiers, brave and patriotic men, and we shall need every available man we can get, so if you see any likely recruits just send them along. We are fighting not for the Belgians only, but for our own homes and families. How lucky it is that we are fighting away from home. You should just see this country; there is scarcely a house of any kind left in Flanders now with a roof or a window. Where are all these poor Belgians now? I hope if any Scout gets the chance he will do a good turn for these unfortunate people.

Well, I must stop and wish you all good-night, for I have had a long day; up at 4 a.m., planning, arranging, thinking, map-drawing, and sniping. All this afternoon with a good telescope have I had my eye glued on the German trenches; one hides one's head

and the glass in a sandbag so as to look something like a sandbag and so be invisible. If you keep very still you may safely look over the parapet, but if you make a mistake, cause a flash in the sun with the periscope, or make any quick movement you may be sure that one of the Huns will let you have a bullet pretty close. But we give them back as much as we get, and so it goes on. War, my dear Scouts, as I used to tell you, is a terrible thing. If we had been prepared, probably there would have been no war, certainly it would have been over by now, and I should be back with you in Stirling. As it is, I am afraid the Kaiser will keep us busy in these parts for some time yet.

In the meantime, good-bye to you all, and good luck. I often see the *Stirling Sentinel*, and am so pleased when any badge news is chronicled. It would cheer me up to get a letter or a post card from some of you occasionally to learn how things are going, but I know that letter-writing is a bit of a nuisance to most boys.

7th to 12th September.

Leave First leave home. What a rush, but how well **Home.** worth while it seemed. So much to do in London, seeing War Office and gunmaker experts about ideas for sniping, bullet-proof shields, armour-piercing bullets, elephant guns, masks, paint, periscopes—all these things at this stage in their infancy and left to the private enterprise and financing of pioneer enthusiasts.

Then there were friends to be seen and relations of brother officers. Every minute was mapped out in advance—then the 48 hours in Scotland, and Stirling

friends revisited ; then a few glorious quiet days at Longworth, my last with my mother, sitting in the garden, roses, nieces, perfect peace, far from all sound of guns—a perfect holiday.

TRAIN TO FOLKESTONE. *Sept. 13th.*

What shall I say ; it was all a lovely time. I felt inclined just to sit back and enjoy it without any fuss. The only time I hated was saying good-bye to you. But you have that jolly family around you—and no distance or events can really separate us. Good-bye and love.

Your v. loving son,

F.M.C.

TRANSPORT LINES. POPERINGHE. *Sept. 14th.*

It is a bore being back, and seems less comfortable after beds, hot baths, etc., but the change does one a lot of good, and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Yes, those short spells of leave were a great blessing ; the only pity was that whole Battalions could not go on leave. The turns seemed so slow coming round, and for the men it was the one thing they had to look forward to. One might have expected these short glimpses of home to make men discontented and to unsettle them, but it did not take long to settle down again.

POTIGE. *Sept. 19th, '15.*

It is a cold, bracing, beautiful autumn morning. I have been up since 5 collecting reports and sending in summary by 9 a.m. Occasional strolls to high ground just outside dug-out to see an aeroplane being "straffed," or to observe the shelling, a crisp feeling

in the air, leaves and beechnuts falling. Soon the trees will be bare and the winter upon us and a different stage of war on hand. Many dug-outs and trenches at present concealed will become visible and unsafe, and many will become impossible when rain begins.

I am busy writing, when I get time, something to help in the training and working of Snipers. If I could bring out something really useful before getting knocked out by climate or shells or bombs or bullets, I should feel happy and content. It has been healthy weather, and going about as a Sniper is interesting, instructive, and an active occupation which suits me well. One of my jobs is looking after carrier-pigeons ; we send four of them daily to test them, 15 miles in 20 minutes or so.

Sept. 25th, 1915.

In Reserve MY DEAR F.,—We are awaiting orders to **for a Push.** move, bivouacking in an orchard. For days guns have been going, far and near. At 4 a.m. this morning the noise reached its zenith, and we knew the push had begun

In the orchard the cows are making themselves a nuisance to various shelters and “ tamboos ” rigged up by officers and men against last night’s drizzle.

In the field beyond the natives are ploughing, apparently as indifferent as the cows themselves to coming events ; while waggons, French and British, motor lorries, ambulances, pass up and down the crowded road. One of our Companies, in shirt sleeves, is doing Swedish drill ; another formed up in hollow square,

is being told by its Captain of coming events ; another is doing steady drill ; and soon breakfast as usual, and make a good one, for you never know your luck. It may be to hang on here ; it may be to join in the strafe. Who knows ? For miles and miles great guns are going and all each soldier molecule has to do is to wait and play his part—to quit himself as a man, still better, as a *Rifleman*.

RAILWAY WOOD. *Oct. 8th.*

Casualties. We began our tour in these new trenches with five or six casualties the first day. One gets reconciled to it all. How sad it seemed to me last night as I groped my way back, in the pitch dark, from reading the service over two good Rifle-men, just out from home, whose names I did not even know. At the next grave was a cross : “ TO FIVE UNKNOWN GOOD MEN ”—known so well, perhaps, and missed so much in some circle at home—and the kindest-hearted getting hardened to it all. It is sad ; it is sad—and yet it is Heaven’s decree, and part of some great unknown intention of Good.

Signallers. Tell Jess I gave her parcel to the Signallers next door, for they have a worriting time and deserve a treat, sitting all day and night squeezed up in dirty dug-outs, with instruments jammed to their ears. “ Hello, hello, can’t hear you. A1 Trench, blown in by . . . yes . . . hello ! Shake your instrument. Hello, that’s better ; is that you ? Don Ack ? Yes, buried, buried, what ? Six-inch shell, what ? Casualties ; no casualties,” etc., etc.

E

—a harassing job, and a job to keep smiling at times, and yet, on the whole, they do.

Oct. 11th, '15.

“Straffing” Here we live high in a wood, or what is
at Railway left of a wood, in a dug-out 6 yards
Wood. long and 4 wide—darkness lit up by
 candles, and cooking done by Leather
 with a primus stove—wonderful man. The wooded
 height reminds me of a bald head, nothing but bristles
 for trees, for the Bosche showers shot and shell upon
 it, day in, day out. This morning, from 8 to 9, he
 got busy, blazing away from three sides at all our
 communication trenches, and dumping trench mortar
 shells on top of us.

Lieut. Rider Our Snipers have been doing good work,
Bird. but, alas, we lost a fine young officer, shot
 through the head by a sniper. It brought
 it very near, and somehow, though so near, it seemed to
 me nothing but a good end as far as he was concerned,
 keenly doing his best, knocked clean out, no pain,
 straight to the not very far beyond where men who do
 their duty go. It was his very keenness that ended his
 time with us. He had asked me to help to put in loop-
 holes in a rotten parapet he was rebuilding that night,
 not 30 yards from the Hun crater. I had been looking
 round and talking over things with him; we had
 cautioned him about exposing himself too much; I
 was looking over the parapet with my periscope and
 talking to him; he jumped up and, without my
 noticing, peeped over just on my left. There was a
 crash and a smack, and I realised he had been hit.

The bullet passed right through a rotten sandbag in the top layer and got him low down in the head. He died as he fell, without a groan or a word. The bullet passed on through a subaltern's cap and splinters of it hit my good Corpl. Scott in the face. The bullet (our first experience of steel-core bullet) had come from a well-concealed loophole 250 yards to our left, which has now been found and tackled. Our men are splendid, always a cheery look or word when you go round; though even Riflemen are sometimes "stumours." One poor fellow, who had not covered

A Timid Rifleman. himself with glory, when invited to jump over the parapet on wiring duty at night, protested to his Captain (Frewen) that he seemed to intend him to go and join his wife. "Where is she?" asked the Captain. "In Heaven." "Heavens, man!" said the gallant Captain, "if she saw you looking like that she'd kick you right out at the door."

LETTER TO "SENTINEL." *Oct. 16th, 1915.*

MY DEAR SCOUTS,—I must send you a line, as I promised, for it is now two months since we met; ever since then I have been too busy to write properly, but now at last we are having a few days off. How one does enjoy getting back to a hut; how comfortable a wooden floor is after a muddy wet one; how grand it is to get a decent wash; what a feeling of liberty it gives one to be able to stand upright and walk in the open. You must do a fortnight in the trenches before you can realise it. And yet I have found it interesting and exciting at times, and the great thing is

that any man who does his turn in the trenches can feel he is doing a "wee" bit more towards the winning day.

As for myself, I have been busy chiefly with the Snipers, having ten splendid picked men, crackshots with telescope rifles. We lie in wait from dawn to dusk ; there are always some of them watching with their eyes glued to the telescope. They become each day more cunning, and have great duels with the enemy's snipers. Sometimes we disguise ourselves by wearing a sandbag, sometimes a mask of brown or green gauze, or with grass and bushes, or it might be a common masquerading mask painted like bricks or stone. We lie quite still for hours peeping cautiously out from some unexpected place behind the trenches. We get some splendid views of the German soldier. The other day I saw a man take his jacket off and fold it up neatly, then he started digging ; soon he got hot and took off his shirt ; then he got still hotter and he took off his shorts, and there you saw him " stark." I think he would have been shy of exposing so much of his person if he had known I was watching so closely. " Why did not I shoot ? " you ask. Well, my boy, I was trying to find out what those slim Bosches were at, and there is a true saying that " Dead men tell no tales." I was scouting, you see, and wanted to find out all I could from him. But, of course, if he had been a sniper trying to shoot us, we should have had to take him on. Then we have an elephant gun ; I got it in London when at home. The German sniper has iron loopholes ; you watch and watch, and at last

you see the slot slowly opening, the muzzle of the rifle being gradually pushed forward. This is the time for your marksman to shoot, but sometimes he shuts up his port-hole quickly, like a snail going back to its shell. Now that's the time for the elephant gun—a steady aim and bang goes the great steel bullet clean through the steel plate, and Mr. Fritz does not bother you again that day. But sometimes a poor chap on our side gets hit—for they have telescopes too. The other day I was looking through my periscope at a German loophole and telling an officer what I saw. He put up his head over the parapet to see ; no sooner had he done so than he fell down, shot right through the head, killed at once. Such a fine young fellow, too, and a very great loss. You see you must never despise your enemy. He is a very good soldier, the German, so do not listen when people laugh or sneer at “ Bosches.” When the newspapers talk so stupidly of “ Huns ” not playing the game, etc., etc., as often as not these Germans are fine fellows doing their best for their country, and doing it better than most. They are standing all sorts of hardships ; they are facing all kinds of dangers, just as much as our own good men at the front, an example to many who might do more. So I give you the tip—always respect what is good in your enemy ; it is part of the code of Chivalry of Scouts.

Well, as you know, we cannot send home full accounts of our battles. The Press Censor would object. Sometimes we have to face heavy shelling of our trenches and dug-outs—shells of all kinds

whizzing or swishing or whistling past, or into our lines, with shaking noises and huge explosions often with sad results. Sometimes it is the trench mortar—you hear a report, you look up, and there you see sailing over towards you, high up over your head, then falling straight down amongst you—a clumsy, bottle-shaped shell like a rum jar. Down it comes. “It’s a dud,” some new hand exclaims (which means it won’t explode), but the old hand knows better. There is a pause, then a loud report, with clouds of dust and splinters, and you are lucky if you, or some poor fellow you are fond of, are not sent sky-high or buried alive. It may be the springing of an underground mine; it may be bullets from machine guns or from snipers; no one knows what each day may bring forth. You may be called on to set your teeth and charge barbed wire and gas and flame. You may have to hang on and stand up to a bombing attack and defend to the last. You never know, but this you know—it is a life-and-death struggle now for the country, and for all you hold most dear. Happy the man who, at such a time, is enabled to do his tiny bit, bravely and wisely and well.

So then, my dear Scouts, play up and do your bit. If you are old enough and can be spared by your parents, lend a hand in helping to watch Britannia’s shores, be thankful and proud that you got the chance. If you can assist the wounded, or help in any single practical way, then be up and doing at once. You may not be able to help in this, but I tell you there is this much each Scout can do—you can help the old

country each day of your life ; for each little thing that you do for others, giving up something yourself, your time, your games, perhaps, for a while, you are helping to build up true men, and that is what we want. A nation made of true men can never be beat.

Good-bye, and Good Luck to you all.

Yours sincerely,

F. M. CRUM.

RAILWAY WOOD. *Oct. 16th, '15.*

Did I tell you of my birthday battle? About 6 p.m., as it got dark, the Germans suddenly opened with every gun at their disposal and bombarded our lines and Battalion Headquarters and communication Trenches.

A tremendous doing ; we expected an attack to follow. Some of the wires got broken by shells, but we were in touch with our guns and Brigade the whole time, and we gave them back as good as they gave us. The men were very good, and stood the strain of the bombardment very well.

The new General (Jeudwine) has just sent a note thanking the Battalion for splendid work and cheeriness and the way they mended the bombarded trenches in the night, repairing all damages. "Purr when you are pleased" is a good motto, so I am very glad to find we have a man in charge who knows its value. So many do not. We had one officer killed and five wounded officers during our fortnight, a higher proportion than usual.

TRAFALGAR DAY. *Oct. 21st.*

Still resting, my head is now far better ; the noise of guns worried me a bit. One of the things that helped me was a 60-mile joy-ride to visit a training school, such a joy getting into the country and away from war.

Oct. 23rd.

General Jeudwine has taken up my sniping keenly and asked me to train the Brigade Snipers. As the Colonel came back to-day I am free to take it on. . . . I finished up my week in command with a lecture, and a route march to-day, and have got on well, but I always feel that though with health I could run a battalion, the strain of it would finish me sooner, so it is wiser not.

Oct. 25th, 1915.

Very hard worked with Courts Martial and starting Snipers. Very heavy rain yesterday, but clear again this morning, the sort of day in October when one looks out and sees from Stirling, Ben Ledi and Ben More, and even Ben Cruachan. In this rotten country one seldom gets those fine dry mornings ; it is damp and misty mostly.

Oct. 30th, 1915.

MY DEAR F.,—This morning I took my Snipers over to see the model school of the 49th Division, where they test all the latest ideas. We had just tested and found very good a simple invention of one of my corporals, when General Plumer came along, so I showed and explained it to him. He made a note of it and said he would push the idea. Lucky we met

at right time and place ; it saves so much time and energy if you can get direct to the fountain head.

Prisons and Courts Martial. After training my men in a large room at Poperinghe, a decent Belgian woman gave us a good meal at one franc a head, and I spent the whole day teaching them how to make reports and what to report. Then I had to visit the prison, sad to think one cannot get on without that sort of thing, but there it is ; discipline has to be strict, and men, unaccustomed to it perhaps in former days of " British freedom," give great trouble at times ; perhaps it was sleeping at their posts, or absent when warned for the trenches, or drunk on service, or what not—anyway, I found a good few of them shut up when I paid my official visit. More than any other duty I hate most this side of soldiering. For two days I was on Court Martial dealing with cases, some up on capital charges, which is a trying responsibility.

But I may be giving a wrong impression. In such a huge army there are bound to be some " bad hats." The discipline and conduct of our men is, on the whole, exemplary, and I have never seen cheerier or more willing men, in spite of every hardship. We do all we can to make things more comfortable. To-night we have a concert. We have converted a large barn into a recreation room, and have a canteen with beer and stores and tea and coffee, which is much appreciated. The men get paid regularly, so that out of the trenches they are comparatively well off.

We will pass on to December 9th in the "Belle Alliance" trenches, 5 miles E.N.E. of Ypres.

December 1915 proved a strenuous time in the trenches. Most of us will remember this time chiefly for its Xmas disappointment, when orders to move from mud and misery of Flanders to Egypt and sunshine were cancelled on Xmas Eve.

Dec. 9th.

We have been passing eventful days in the trenches and are now out again for four days. To-day it has poured and poured, and the mud which was "the limit" before must now be beyond all words. The guns keep going through it all, and I suppose the troops of both sides are being put to as high a test of endurance as ever is reached in war. My own occupation of late has been centred in supervising sniping and with visits to the trenches at night. You can hardly imagine the mud. One squelches and struggles along in gum-boots, slipping, slithering and stumbling in the dark, saving oneself from a fall at the expense of covering one's hands inch-deep in mud, or, failing that, taking a pearler and covering oneself and one's clothes from top to toes with liquid filth, which one carries back to the dug-out, impossible to clean up self or clothes. I think I mind the mud far more than any shells or bullets, though I do not pretend to enjoy them either. As for the men, I suppose many of them do not feel it as much as I do, but their discomfort is far greater and they have far more to put up with than the Second-in-Command, with the excellent Matthews and Leather to help and look after

him on his muddy return ; far less space to live in, fewer clothes to change into, and long hours of sentry go and carrying rations and stores in the dark and mud. They are splendid in it all. The other day I had to get some men to an exposed post by day ; the only way was up a trench chock full of water. We crawled flat across the open till we got to the trench, then on our stomachs over the parapet into the trench. We all had " thigh-gum-boots " on, which reach up to the hip. I planted the sides of my feet against the trench each side, supporting and elbowing up the trench ; then it got too wide and down I slipped, down, down, over the thighs, so cold the water was as it poured in ; now I am wet I do not care. I will shove along, but no, down and down, in liquid mud. This won't do for a man of 5 ft. 6 ins., I thought. However, it got no deeper, and on I got my party, struggling, till one of them lost heart and stuck. Leaving with him Liddiard, one of my best Snipers, on I went with the other Riflemen to the isolated post. Crump holes in every direction, for this was a favourite " cock shy " of the Bosche. One dug-out I found blown right in, some of the men's packs buried in the debris of fallen roof and sandbags and, marvellous to relate, not a man hit, though some were shaken. There they sat, collected in the remaining dug-out, a charcoal brazier burning well, three sitting round it, four or five more huddled up just clear of the liquid mud, in a hole not fit for swine to wallow in. Here they had to stay all day, not a move for fear of aeroplanes, and every now and then a far-off report, then

a sing-song sound and the c-r-r-rump of some big shell bursting somewhere in the same parish. These were some of the men who stand on guard barring the way to Calais. They had sent word to say they were being shelled, and might they shift to a flank. I had come to tell them they must stick it for 24 hours. I was wet to the skin, but for me there was a change of dry socks on return, but for them 12 hours more of waiting in wet and cold. It was difficult to swear at them, but it had to be done, for their orders were clear, and then I did what I could to remind them it was an important post, and that men who stick such things are the men no Kaiser can beat. Well, I did what I could and left them a bit bucked up ; that afternoon a crump carried away three of them, poor chaps. Well, all Riflemen are not heroes, as I found on my return. There was Liddiard still struggling to get the other Rifleman on, but devil an inch could he get him forward, groaning and moaning and whining, all pluck and effort gone, a pitiful object he was. We tried persuasion, abuse, ridicule. He whined about cramp, he was 37 years of age, he was a married man, etc., etc. I saw he was useless, even if I did get him on, so we settled to get him back if we could. At the thought of getting back instead of forward his craven spirit bucked up a bit and he made some way, moaning and groaning, but hurrying after a fashion. "A proud man would Colonel Green be if he led a thousand such as you," said I, as Liddiard heaved him along by the seat of his pants and I gave a hand at the scruff of his neck. Somehow we got him back to Headquarters. Let us draw a curtain over

such scenes. On returning I sent him to the Doctor, who said there was nothing wrong—alas, even Rifle-men are not all heroes ! I had to get on for a Court Martial 3 miles off by 2 p.m., no time to change properly, so off I hurried, arriving just in time ; the cold began to tell, my knees were burning with rheumatism and my body as stiff as a poker, so instead of returning to the Battalion I arranged to stay with the General. He was kindness itself and his servant, a treasure, a Scotsman. A good dinner, the General's underclothes, socks, trousers, and a bed rigged up in his own room, and I woke up next morning right as a trivet. I have made a long story of it, but I think you like my letting myself go occasionally ; it kind of lifts the curtain and shows you the kind of thing.

I watch the war from a distance as well as from near ; the end is not yet by a very long chalk ; chiefly because *we* are not soldiers. If we *had* been and if we had had a Government which knew its own mind, and if we had *one* fixed international policy among the Allies, we should have had the Bosche stone cold by now. But we bungle along, with fresh time required to rectify fresh mistakes, and so it all drags on. The Hun is efficient, unscrupulous, decided in all he does, out and out blackguard that he is ; he may deal us more sledgehammer blows, but his cause is wrong and ours is right, and that must win in the end, even with us as its unworthy champions.

We improve, and are being beaten into shape, and they, with extending lines and swollen heads and endless intrigues and lies, they are bound to fail. Does

any man with Faith say no ? And what does it matter what happens to you and me so long as we mend our ways and grow worthy and win. For years I have felt unhappy about it all ; it had to come, this chastening.

We may get much hammering yet, one must set one's teeth to it all ; the gallant young fellows thrown away, the tears at home ; it is troubles and trials, not comfort and money which make the *man*, and Britain will yet look the world in the face, stronger and better than ever before.

We are under orders to move. Where to ? You know my love for the Salient, and will share with us our sorrow at parting. My love to you all, and may you keep strong and well and free from worries, for all is well.

SAME TRENCHES. *Dec. 18th, 1915.*

My First time in command in Trenches. We had expected to leave this " lucky horse-shoe " some time ago, but we got word we were for yet another four day's tour. It was a keen disappointment ; still no one grumbled, and being a move we had made before, we got off without trouble. It is a great help knowing the trenches, especially in dark and stormy weather. The hundred and one arrangements for sending up rations and water and coke, for greasing men's feet, for inspection of smoke helmets, all these things become a matter of routine, difficult to start in a new battalion, but easy enough in a well organised battalion of old hands like ours, with a good Quartermaster, Adjutant and Staff.

We got off comfortably 4 p.m. and by 8.15 p.m. each Company had reported to us at H.Q. "relief complete." We were left in possession and I found myself for first time in charge in the trenches. Leather produced a good dinner after which Frewen and I struggled round, visiting the various posts, a fairly quiet night. Back about 2 a.m., I turned into my dug-out, and putting an old newspaper on the bed, lay full length in my dirty gum-boots, for one can't sleep on such occasions, any unusual sounds, rapid fire, a salvo of whizz-bangs, and one is on the *qui vive*. It was the same in South Africa, not "jumpy," but a feeling of uneasiness. It would of course be better to take things more easily and sleep, but there it is, I hardly sleep at all during my tour in the trenches. These are noisy trenches, a lot of gunning, but as a rule few casualties. The Snipers went out and lit the usual fire in a deserted farm and successfully drew fire; the usual messages came in from the Companies and all went much as usual till 3 p.m. 13th December, when big shells landed nearer than usual. They shook the whole place, but it had often happened before, so we did not worry. About 4 p.m., six of us, were sitting in the H.Q. dug-out when a 5.9 shell landed plumb on the top of us. Cullinan was standing at the telephone. I was at the door and Frewen near me. Miller, the Doctor, the R.A. officer and Purdon the M.G.

Dug-out . Officer were at the other end, just where
blown up. the shell landed. The noise was terrific.
 Then a sound of tumbling debris and

struggling. Cully and I were untouched and Frewen nearly so, we got the others out and found that only Purdon was seriously hurt and unconscious. More shells, I got to the telephone dug-out and spoke to the Brigade, while I was doing so a shell landed in the signallers' dug-out. It rained shells for some time, great geysers of mud came tumbling down on us as we stooped in the trenches and all the time Miller, having extricated and shaken himself, was splendid in looking after others. It was evident our position was now located and it was a poor look-out for the brains of the local defence ! General Jeudwine came up and consulted, where to go ? a conundrum. Every possible place was full up, water and rats were in possession everywhere else, nothing for it but to start and dig elsewhere, and so all night, in addition to their other work, our good men were at it.

The next day came and there was still no good covered way to our chosen cover in rear. When shelling began we got all the men, skirmishing one by one, to a good place 300 yards in rear. Once there they were safe and we had the satisfaction of seeing crump after crump landing on our vacated dug-outs and trenches and of watching shells landing beautifully on the various dummy "cockshies" we had erected, smoke fires, canvas screens, etc. But the cold was intense ; thanks to Sergt.-Major Archer we got hot coffee and rum issued in spite of great difficulties, but, by Jove, it *was* cold. We were not sorry when it grew dark and the firing died

down, so that we could move back to our lines. Another night of good hard work found 5 good dug-outs finished and a trench to them, drained and boarded, a fine performance done with the help of some of the King's Liverpool Pioneers. And so we got out of what looked a very unpleasant position. The bombardment was evidently preparatory to some attack. We had 5 or 6 dug-outs smashed in and 3 rifles hit, yet marvellous to say, only one man killed and one wounded during the whole of those stormy 4 days.

We have had a large dose of this salient, and the hope of getting away to warmer lands (Egypt) with a rest from shot and shell and mud is cheering us all up.

19th December.

It was at this time that the Germans made a gas attack east of Ypres, and the Battalion which had just relieved us had a difficult time. We had expected it throughout our tour of duty, the wind having been from the east throughout, nor were we allowed to forget by the Brigade, Division and Corps Staffs who constantly sent reminders and cautions, till one—well—I won't say what.

20th December.

We lose General Jeudwine shortly, getting Lord Binning as our Brigadier. I am very sorry he is going as he is a real friend now, besides being one of the best soldiers I have come across. During our trying time he was A1. In the middle of it he sent for me and began by saying he had been thinking

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over something I had said and that it was right, whereas we had disagreed overnight; and seeing I was tired, he insisted on my lying down on his bed. I was soon half asleep, but not too far gone to be aware of his getting up from his work and putting a blanket over me, which I thought very good of him as I dozed off to the sound of the guns.

Xmas Day, 1915.

We are nearly through Xmas Day. It began with the buglers playing Xmas hymns in camp on their key bugles. A Church Parade Service conducted by big Neville Talbot. Xmas dinner at 1. A band concert at 3 p.m., conducted by Mr. Tyler, of 60th and Warren Hastings fame, and now there is another concert going on.

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We are busy with plans for moving but all is still very uncertain.

26th December.

A great We had a good Xmas for the
Disappointment. men but it was spoiled by a sad
 knock last night. We do not
 move, and return at once to the old game. I find
 it hard to keep smiling. Oh, what a bore. The
 thought of sun instead of mud had bucked us all
 up, but we will plod along and try to be content.
 The men have been so splendid and full of the
 idea of a move, so that it is a keen trial. They
 looked so keen, alert and full of life at the Church
 Parade and Concert yesterday, and now I feel the
 dull drudgery feeling will have to be fought against.

You see we never have had a proper rest since the start. We go back to new trenches (Lancashire Farm) very soon, so I must buck up and pluck up courage and give a good lead. I do not ever remember a more cruel disappointment.

ELVERDINGHE CHATEAU. 31st *December*, 1915.

I think that few of my stays in various places in Flanders have left a more lively picture on my mind than the three days spent in this fine chateau. How far is it wise to commit one's impressions to paper is a question, but I sit down in the Count's dining-room to jot down a few notes before leaving in the evening to start the New Year in the trenches. As I write, sitting at the dining-room table, looking up at the ceiling with its family coats of arms, one side of the hall sandbagged up to the roof, a fire burning merrily in the great fire-place at the other end, heavy "strafting" is going on between the big guns, and splinter marks remind me that, if shelling gets nearer, we must vacate the ancient hall for muddy trenches.

After our Xmas disappointment we got orders to come to Elverdinghe Chateau, so did two other Battalions. We all turned up, only to find that the occupants (49th Div.) had no idea of any orders to turn out. Thus in a place not 2 miles from the Bosche, collected large numbers of men, new to their surroundings, giving their position away at night with numberless electric torches flashing like glow-worms all through the beautiful woods, swearing,

slushing and searching for tents, shelters, dug-outs, tripping up, all in confusion. By day, liberties being taken enough to turn the hair gray of the cautious Commandant. Carts loaded with R.E. stores, white planks to catch the eye, parts of huts and what not; mounted orderlies in the open, formed groups parading, . . . goodness knows, what a show!

It is a beautiful Chateau, an artificial lake in front, great oak and beech trees in the grounds, thickly wooded towards the walled garden, green-houses, fruit trees on the walls, stables, motor garages, and the village close by. The house a large gray stone square "pile"—four stories high and built in 1874.

How the dickens it has so far escaped the shells, no one knows. The little ornamental bridge 100 yards north-east is blown up, a huge crater 20ft. deep has formed a new pond on the green slope, not 20 yards from the Chateau itself. Splinters from the explosions have broken windows and doors, beyond, a gash, and in the same line, more huge shell holes, it seems almost as if these shots were the long and short brackets made by some Bosche gunner, who had the Chateau for his mark. Or is it that the Count's wife is an Austrian?

At 1.30 p.m. we were lunching on the 3rd floor. What would the dear ones at home say, so many of their beloved living in this one chateau, as if we were in perfect peace? instead of being a registered target for 15-inch guns? No censor would pass

this note if I mentioned the number of the Count's guests, or enlarged on the facts.

At 1.30 p.m. shelling begins, shrapnel bursting in the air, splinters flicking the lake in front, scattering and puzzling the ducks as they swim about, at a loss where to swim to next. Their wings are clipped, or they would surely fly ; I would anyway. Then comes a noise as of a motor 'bus, whirling through the air. We know it of old, in many parts, but here it comes, jolly near, just above our devoted heads, and then a crash beyond, and the whole Chateau trembles. We console ourselves with the idea that it is really quite a long way off and go on with our lunch. More shells flick the lake and the walls of the Chateau, then Rifleman Gambrell comes in and says some of them are tear shells and that all eyes are watering. We adjourn and walk down the staircase (poor Count, what a muddy staircase). In the front hall a badly-wounded man is lying on a stretcher. Everyone looks as if he was crying or had a very bad cold, but we know the "lachrymatory shell."

Just then another motor 'bus-like rumbling up above and then a crash. I push through to the front door, in time to see a cloud of debris. The Church Army hut which was—is now no more—gone sky high, all except a tricolour flag found fluttering as if to a mast.

Half an hour before the Sergeant-Major had reported to me that we had "taken it over" games, gramophones, cups, etc., all correct—gone ! What of the caretaker ?

The men in tents and shelters had cleared into the trenches for cover, but not all, for the first big shell, the one which we had flattered ourselves was far away, had found a whole platoon of Monmouthshire lads, who had just fallen in, ready to march off. Altogether 5 big shells, 15-inch, landed in this part of the wood. Three of them harmless, two fatal to many a home in Wales. Once in a blue moon these big shells come off ; this was once. One can never forget such a scene, one body was blown 200 yards over the tops of the giant beech trees—that is enough of description.

It fell to me that night to arrange the service. Like ourselves at Hooge, the outgoing regiment could not see to it themselves. Herculean work on the part of our digging parties, waggons commandeered to remove the remains, all in the dark, a large trench in a cemetery a mile away ; an English and a Welsh padre (no one could say to what Church the good fellows belonged) and a single oil lamp lit up a sad scene at 11 p.m. that night ; 35 men had done their bit for a side, for a cause which surely must win. God was with us as we stood at their graves. I walked back alone, somehow feeling at peace. . . . I came back to my room, the Count's best dressing-room, which I shared with Laton Frewen, and turning into my valise on the floor, warm as a trivet, felt thankful for so much comfort.

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If one comes to write one's story of the war, with a mind and body and spirit released from the strain, this account may help to recall three anxious days of bungling and bravery.

21st January.

The first day of rest for ages, motoring to Army workshops, and seeing all the latest inventions. The *motor* drive ! Seeing *cows* grazing ! fields, houses not crumped to glory, how refreshing !

Boy Scouts. About your *Boy Scouts*. Do you ever pause and look back and see a fraction of the good you have done for all these boys when they are men ? You should talk to a man out here who has been a Boy Scout. Why do people expect to see results at once ? Why do they go about groaning about this terrible war ? Only because they cannot look beyond their noses. If you or I passed away to-morrow, we could go with a smile of thankfulness that we had had the chance of helping on the Boy Scout Movement.

Jan. 29th, 1916.

We have just parted with two splendid A.B.'s sent from the Navy to see trench life and report on it all to their Ships' Companies. They seemed to be much impressed and to have formed a high opinion of our men and the way they "stick it." Needless to say, there was great competition among the Riflemen to act as hosts and show them round. They put in 24 hours in one of the advance trenches and had quite enough, so they said, preferring their own element to Napoleon's fifth element, to say nothing of a shelling they came in for which, though a harmless one, sounded well and made an impression. It was only the Kaiser's birthday "Strafe." Fine fellows they were.

Feb. 6th, 1916.

I got on very well with my lecture to Artillery Officers, at Bailleul, on co-operation with Infantry, a jolly drive, and lovely day. About 70 Officers present, the Senior Artillery Officer, an old friend, also Gosling (60th, a Brigadier). They said it was just what they wanted ; a friendly criticism and explanation of Infantry difficulties and discussion afterwards. I found another 60th friend in Hugh Willan, once my subaltern, now my senior. I meet a good many men who remember me of whom I have no sort of recollection, which is both stupid of me and clever of them, but having dropped soldiering like a live coal, I seem to have put many good friends out of my head as well as all my military knowledge.

12th February, 1916.

Last Tour of Duty in Salient. MY DEAR F.,—It is some time since I wrote, for being in command during an anxious four days, I kept my eyes on the steering. With the newspapers talking of great German moves on in the West, and of special cemeteries and hospitals being prepared behind their Ypres lines, you will be glad to know I am not yet an inmate of any of them. We got here (near Cassel) last night, I more dead than alive, but to-day again life is returning. Verdant is back, so all worry is off my shoulders. After six days' rest we returned to the (Lancashire Farm) trench ; we found things more lively than usual, and it seemed probable that the Hun had some scheme up his sleeve. Shelling, shelling, shelling, and machine gunning all day and night,

but mostly away from our immediate sphere of usefulness. For the O.C. it is watch and watch, and keep on watching and wondering what is at the back of anything unusual. For the time he is screwed up, as it were, ready to do the right thing if it may be, and able to keep cheery and confident. He must be up and about, visiting sentries and snipers and bombers and working and wiring parties, and watching through the telescope from Observation Posts, an eye on the weather-cock for gas winds.

It was a great satisfaction to see the victory of our snipers. When we came away not a shot was ever fired by the Bosche Sniper, and he had closed and sandbagged up all his loopholes. Six weeks ago, when we took over the trenches, the Brigadier (Lord Binning) warned us that sniping was bad, and so it was.

Well, since we left the trenches, we have had hard marching for tired men ; got in last night, some hitch somewhere, no very hospitable reception for me from an old Frenchman, alone in a biggish house, with his old wife ill. "Soldiers make such a noise." "Must be in bed by 8." "No water." "No beds," and what not. I flopped down, wet through and full of rheumatism, and dead beat. The hardest floor good enough ; too tired to take any food. However, this morning I am better, and have moved to far better quarters.

After moving back to Cassel, where the Battalion rested a few days and was inspected by the

Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, we were sent South by train to an unknown destination, which turned out to be Amiens, thus ending a nine months tour of continuous duty of record duration in the Salient.

13th February.

We are very happy and comfortable by contrast, and we all begin to feel new men.

14th February.

It is strange that we have now been relieved three times just before an attack came off; each time I have felt something was coming. Curiously, twice I was in command of the Battalion. This last time I sent a special private note direct to the Divisional General telling him I thought it was coming, so I expect he now thinks me a bit of a prophet.

17th February.

To-day we were inspected by a distinguished Fifer. He was much pleased and called me aside as I passed at the tail of the Battalion and said, "They march very well indeed." So they do—the Key Bugles are a great feature in the 8th Battalion. I really think the Battalion looks wonderful considering all they have gone through.

CHAPTER III.

ARRAS AND SNIPING.

March, 1916, to October, 1918.

It was among the ruins of the suburbs of Arras, in the village of Blangy, that we had our greatest successes in sniping.

Set upon at Verdun, the French had called on the British for support. At very short notice, the British took over a large extent of line near Arras. This great move cost us our long-promised rest. It was a great disappointment, but so soon as the cause was known we took it smiling. The novelty of moving to France and meeting French troops also helped us to forget our troubles.

First Meeting with French Troops. I remember going on ahead with Verdant Green and George Rennie, the two 60th Colonels. After calling on the French Brigadier and being received with great courtesy, we were guided to the Headquarters of the 111th Regiment (which comes from Marseilles), and which we were to relieve. It was evidently a big occasion—Entente Cordiale—a big lunch, and some flutter in the dove-cot. We were all introduced, and bowed and shook hands. Present : the Colonel, a fine old veteran from Algiers, with the

green and white ribbon, a regular hater of Huns ; the Porte Drapeau, a kind of cross between Adjutant and Sergeant-Major ; the doctor, and one or two others. Here was the chance for Verdant and me to settle our long outstanding difference. He claimed to be the better French scholar of the two. His grandmother, he said, was French, and that, he held was final, but I had always maintained that having had both a Swiss nurse and a French governess, that counted more in my favour. George Rennie, being more of an expert in horseflesh than in French, was hardly able to decide the point. The luncheon party passed pleasantly enough. It was easy to gather that Blangy was no health resort. . . . The Hun, two nights before our visit, had heavily trench-mortared our Allies, and driven them out of their advanced posts on the River Scarpe. They were not distressed to be leaving, but at the same time were anxious to make all as easy as possible for us and not to exaggerate any shortcomings these suburbs might have as a residence. The conversation did not exactly flow. It was friendly, but laboured and spasmodic. The old difficulties of the Tower of Babel intervened. At times there were awkward pauses. " Nous les avons," said the French Colonel. " Yes," said I, sitting at the other end of the table, " as we say, ' We have got them on toast,' " and I called out to Verdant to put that into his best French. But the war had driven the word for " toast " out of his head. His failure was complete, and the politely puzzled face of Monsieur le Colonel scored one up to me. When it came to

speeches—well, I won't be hard on Verdant, for no one can compete with a Frenchman in putting things nicely on such occasions.

The French Colonel. Then came the visit to the trenches. I remember hinting to the Porte-Drapeau, as we sailed down the centre of the main road to Blangy in full view of long, white chalk lines of German trenches, that we should never have been able to take such liberties in Flanders, and that the sight of three khaki and three light-blue warriors might give the coming relief away. “Vous avez raison,” he said. “Ni nous non plus—voilà le boyau ; mais Monsieur le Colonel, il est très conservateur. If you were to say to him, it is dangerous, he would reply, ‘Then I will go.’”

Sniping was not a special department in the French army, and it took both Verdant and me all our combined stock of French to convey what a “Snipair's” work entailed. The nearest French word seemed to be “guetteur” (?), and I was duly introduced to a young N.C.O. who had achieved local celebrity by killing two Huns in a shot from the roof of a tall ruined house. The place was pointed out to me, and I gaily climbed up, the young Frenchman following gingerly. We got an extraordinarily good view, looking down into the Hun trenches, some 50 yards off, where all seemed wonderfully quiet. It was a foolish liberty to take. I did not realise at the time that my guide was too polite to tell me he had never been there since August, when the leaves were on the trees.

It was an interesting day. The French troops

seemed as interested in us as we were in them, and I remember more than once standing arm-in-arm with my pal the Porte Drapeau, to be kodaked by some poilu. This struck me, because with us cameras were not allowed.

Blangy. For the next two months and more Blangy became my hunting ground. When I was not prowling about or searching with a glass from some vantage point, I was studying maps, or aeroplane photographs, or dreaming of Blangy !

The Risks of Scouts. We started badly. The very first day I went down to explore with Corporals Otterwell and Riches, my two best men. We climbed every ruined house at the back, which seemed to offer a view, and so, after a thorough search, worked our way forward to the foremost trenches and listening posts. Everything seemed still, and almost one might have thought the Hun had gone.

At a point where the Main Street ran through the village, the cobble stones had been pulled up, and a shallow trench dug to connect the foremost posts, on each side of the road. A few sandbags increased the amount of shelter, but still a man had to keep down very low to avoid being seen from the opposite barrier 50 yards away. It must be remembered the French had only recently taken up this new line. Peeping over gradually, I got a general view, and then proceeded to search the opposite breastwork methodically with my telescope for hidden loopholes. Suddenly it gave me a bit of a turn to see the silver outline and black centre of a rifle barrel pointing in

my direction. It seemed so close. I kept quite still. Then, slowly, to my relief, it moved away from me. Keeping the glass steady, after noting the exact position with relation to a conspicuous pink sandbag, I slowly withdrew my head and showed it first to Otterwell and then to Riches. We all saw the rifle barrel move. Returning to cover, we considered our plans and noted the exact position on paper.

I then went back to warn the Sergeant on duty that he was to caution everyone who passed to keep down, and get the trench deepened that night. As I went, a shot rang out, and I turned to see both my Corporals wounded in the bottom of the trench. Otterwell died in my arms almost immediately. So, scouting the way for the benefit of his comrades, passed away as fine a young fellow as I have seen this war. He was awaiting his Commission at the time. Riches was not severely wounded. From that time onwards a special vendetta existed between the opposing Snipers at Blangy.

March, 1916.

Letters from Blangy. I write from the dining-room of a prosperous oil merchant, mirrors and highly ornamental furniture, shell holes through the ceiling, the windows done up with sacking to keep out the wind, Frewen's, Miller's (the doctor) and my valises laid out in three corners ; in the fourth corner a stove ; in the centre your special correspondent, alone, having just lunched, sitting at a large table, surrounded by papers and letters, mess and canteen accounts, etc., sniffing and rather pulled down after

three days' nasty cold, but the worst is over. Napoleon himself, with a cold in the head, so Ian Hamilton tells us, was but a moderate General.

Outside still snow and sleet and cold, and beyond, some 500 yards, the trenches, with Verdant Green going round, energetic as ever, occasional shots from guns or rifles. There you have the scene pictured. So many thanks for yours of 5th and Xylonite idea for range cards.

My dear Corporal Otterwell, as you will have heard, is gone, such a loss. I feel it every day. A fine young fellow, just going home for his Commission. I held his head up as he passed away, and realised as I saw him passing what a useful young life was passing, no pain (my dear Jess) a soldier's end, a gallant lead and duty done to the last. I feel no sort of feeling of revenge, and yet I tell my Snipers it is their duty to do all they can to hit back.

New trenches, and difficult, in ruined, crumpled-in suburbs and factories. At first things incredibly quiet. But now we have war declared. Already we have most of their loopholes located and many of their steel plates pierced by our steel bullets. It is sad, the whole thing, but then I never looked upon it as anything else. When will it end? Verdun? All eyes are rivetted there now . . . may the French hold on and stick it. It is an all-important stand they are called on to make. May they be given strength. Our cause must win in the end, but we must show ourselves worthy champions first.

March 15th.

We have a big proposition in front of us with the gentlemen in the opposing ruins, but we will defeat them I am sure.

With war once declared between the Snipers at Blangy we set to and brought all our past experience into play in real earnest.

A good system of observation was established with a central post, connected by telephone, in the roof of a high red brick building, the shell of which was still left standing.

Hidden, camouflaged loopholes were so constructed that every part of the Hun lines could be kept under constant and close observation. Some of these posts were so near to Fritz that the work of building them took many nights. To excavate the stones the Snipers, in some cases, dug them out laboriously with penknives to prevent being heard. The slightest sound drew bombs and rifle grenades and every change had to be gradual so as not to attract attention.

For a time the Hun was top dog; and, being newcomers, many casualties, as many even as 9 in one day, took place among our men from sniping alone. Every casualty which occurred was at once investigated; nine times out of ten it was an avoidable casualty, and steps were taken to prevent its recurrence. But the maze of ruins was so confusing that often a man would be hit standing at his post from what seemed to him to be behind, and this might well have caused that lack of confidence known to the troops as "getting the wind up."

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I hit on the idea of drawing a plan of the trenches on a blackboard, and lecturing each Company that went into this tricky sector and explaining exactly how each casualty had occurred, and how unnecessary it had been. In this way men got over the idea that the Hun sniper did anything superhuman, and realised what *not* to do. It also gave them an interest in their work.

The Hun did not long have it all his own way. After long planning and watching, Otterwell was at last avenged by our left-handed champion, Sheehan, who killed his man and silenced all sniping from that quarter.

I remember one particular point of vantage from which we "strafed the Hun." We called it the "Boiler House" for it contained the remains of the boilers of some huge ruined brewery. It was a tricky place to approach, and we had two men killed the first week. We had two bombers stationed at this point, where, peeping through a small hole in the wall, they watched for the Hun not 15 yards away.

One day, going to this post with Riches, I discovered that, by creeping forward like a cat and pushing a small ladder up on a platform above the bombing post, it was possible to look right down on the Hun, and occasionally catch a glimpse of the sentry. As I was looking my attention was attracted to earth being shovelled up at a point in the trench about 50 yards off. Presently the shovelling ceased, and a healthy young Hun emerged in his shirt-sleeves, spade in hand, and smoking a cigar. He rested and leaned against

the wall of the trench, looking up and staring in my direction. Fifty yards through a good Zeiss glass brings men pretty near. It was hard to keep still and realise he did not see me. I showed him to Riches who, trembling like an eager terrier, was all for a shot.

But I wanted to learn more. As I was watching, presently from a new direction six more Huns, carrying hods on their backs and large blocks of concrete, came up to this spot in file. I let them proceed till they all vanished with their loads down into the hole from which originally the thrown-up earth had attracted attention. What were they doing? Soon they came out and stood in a clump. This was asking too much! Riches fired and claimed to hit two, but the cloud of brick dust obscured my view. I only saw signs of some such struggle as that on the day when poor Otterwell fell. I remember clearly the expression of terror on the faces of those of them who did escape, crouching and running past us.

From that time until it was demolished by "rum-jars," competition to man the Boiler House was keen among the Snipers, who claimed to have done much damage to the opposing garrison.

A year after I revisited this spot and found a comfortable, beautifully-built, concrete dug-out with a British subaltern sleeping inside. I have often wondered how many men it cost to build this dug-out under our noses, and still think of it as an example of the contrast between the two Armies. The Hun officer drives his men; his comfort

comes before their lives. The British idea of leadership is very different.

I have said enough to give an idea of Blangy and sniping. We finished top dog, and casualties from sniping came to an end, and so, in due course, did our tour in this sector.

MONDAY, 27th March, 1916.

From Major CRUM to the Stirling Scouts, *per* Scout
HENRY RUSSELL, No. 1 Troop.

Letter to Scouts. MY DEAR SCOUTS,—I was so glad to hear of your doings through the Scouts who wrote to me in answer to my last in the *Sentinel*, especially Nos. 1 and 4 Troops. One of them finished a very nice letter by saying : “ I hope you won’t think me forward in writing to you, as I always find your letters in ‘ Scout Notes ’ so interesting.”

Well, now, I just sit down to write again because I want you to know it is just what one enjoys—to get a cheery letter from a Boy Scout, and know things are going along well while we are away. I got several letters, and they quite cheered me up when I was feeling a bit tired of this old war. I am so glad Miss Gilbert keeps the Scout flag flying. Scouts ! what should we be in Stirling if it were not for the ladies ? A full salute to them all, I say.

I write this from a swagger house in a ruined town bigger than Stirling (Arras)—very comfortable until the shelling begins. My bedroom, for instance, is fit for a princess—mirrors, candelabras, beautiful curtains, chairs, and wall paper. But in the ceiling

a large gaping hole is seen, and the brass bedstead itself has a tell-tale dent on it, which reminds one that one's sleep might any moment be cut short and one might have to bolt to the cellars two stories below. The old lady caretaker gets very wild, and talks very fast, and keeps a jealous eye on the property of the French Admiral, the owner of the house. I am afraid it does dirty the beautiful staircase when a soldier comes up with a message from the muddy trenches. But she generally ends up a long harangue each time with a good Scout smile and says : "Mais—hélas ! C'est la guerre." I am afraid if some boys were here to see and hear her gesticulating they would find it great sport "drawing her," but the best way is, as the Chief Scout says, always to put yourself in the other fellow's place, and see it from his or her point of view. After all, the old dame is only doing her duty when she does strafe us for muddying the floor.

I see from the home papers that the cat is out of the bag as regards our having relieved the French in new trenches, so I don't suppose the censor will mind my telling you a bit about the French army. It was a new experience for all of us, and I think the French soldiers were as much interested in us as we were in them—anyway, they stared and looked round and all seemed very friendly. You would have laughed if you had seen us dressed up as French soldiers with light blue greatcoats and blue iron hats, going round visiting and learning all about the new trenches. I get on very well, and they are too polite to laugh at

my bad French accent, and the men, too, get on better than you would expect. The usual procedure is for the khaki hero to unbosom himself eloquently in English and end up with "compris?" He then thinks that he has been talking in French. Usually a pot of jam from our men or a cigarette from a Frenchman starts the friendship. But if I were you I would try and learn French properly when you get the chance, because you may not always have a pot of jam handy; and even if the war is over soon, as we all hope it may be, the Frenchman should always be a great friend for long, long after the war. I think "Delta" will be angry with me, but I go further and say I hope we shall not go in for hating the Bosche after the war. We must hate all the cruel things that he has done, but as often as not it is the fault of those who taught him. The ordinary German soldier is a good fellow at bottom—a brave man, doing his duty as a good soldier. I think I see more of him than most, for, unknown to him, I am so constantly watching him, with a first-class telescope. The other day from a high point of view, not 800 yards off, I saw one leave the trench and run out to rescue a cat which was straying in our direction. Of course the cat knew better and wanted to join the British, but Fritz—you must put yourself in Fritz's place—thought it was far better to be a German cat, and so he risked being shot to save the animal. But it was stupid of Fritz all the same, for he showed us in so doing a yellow stripe down his trousers enabling us to tell what regiment he belonged to.

Yes, I see them doing all sorts of things—laughing and talking. Three days ago we had a fall of snow, and we saw them snowballing each other in rear of their trenches. Well, well, the pity is that we should all be bombing and shooting each other instead of snowballing, all because that awful Kaiser is an ambitious blackguard, and he and his inner circle of Huns have so misled and misguided the wonderful Bosche nation that they now seem almost past praying for. So then we have got to fight, and fight with every nerve. There can be no excuse for any able-bodied man now. It is a matter of life and death still, but we have not got to hate or despise.

And now I will stop. I have things to do, and so have you, I expect. Lessons or games—whatever it is, like Scouts, lead the way in all that you do, and good luck to you all.

Yours, as a Scout,

F. M. CRUM.

May, 1916.

Acq. In May we moved to Acq, and here, under General Skinner, I started a Brigade School of Sniping.

I was lucky enough to be billeted at the School-house, where M. and Mme. Astrua put their best room at my disposal, and lent me their schoolroom for lectures, out of the children's school hours. Six weeks under their hospitable roof and we became tremendous friends, and still we keep up the correspondence.

It is a pity more Britishers can't talk French, and more Frenchmen talk English, for "bon" and "no

bon " and even " Allemande no bon " go a very short way in expressing the admiration felt by us all for this heroic people.

The Village School. Twice at intervals of six months I revisited this School. The children remembered the sweets and games, and Madame gave me a great welcome. She was bright and cheery as ever, doing her husband's work at the School, and as Town Clerk, while he, in spite of his age, had been called up to serve in the Artillery. To-day I am glad to hear he is safely back to his Schoolhouse and garden and Madame ; and the store of gas masks for the little scholars is only a part of a horrible dream.

The Sniping School. My Sniping School was a great success. We were full of ideas, all of us, Hicks, Harman, Sherry, Cox, Taylor and others. The scandal of hundreds of men getting bowled over, simply from want of teaching and imagination, stirred us to great efforts, so that in addition to building a range in a chalk quarry close by, and greatly improving our marksmanship, we were able to give demonstrations to troops resting out of the line.

The methods of teaching are best understood from reading the small book which I wrote called *Scouts and Snipers in Trench Warfare*.

On one occasion we gave a special demonstration to the Divisional School.

This was a great success except for one unfortunate incident. It was not that anyone was killed, though we did take many liberties which would not have

been tolerated at Hythe. The trouble was this. In the morning we had rehearsed the demonstration. All had gone well. The actors ran through their parts and all was thought out, even to the audience—men being detailed to represent the Corps and Divisional Commanders (Sir Charles Ferguson and Sir V. Couper), 3 Brigadiers and 4 Colonels, all of whom had expressed their intention of coming.

It was part of a scene in the education by acting, that one of the Snipers got hit through some foolish mistake of a Tenderfoot. In coaching him I had told him to be a bit more forcible in his language and try to feel as if he really were in pain.

The afternoon came, and with it lorries and motors bringing a large and distinguished audience.

The Snipers were in great form ; their shooting with rifles, telescopic and sniperscopic was excellent. The targets, made as near the real thing as possible, were brought and shown to the audience riddled with holes.

Observation and other practices were carried out with men dressed up in German uniforms occupying a reproduction of the German trenches. Targets were located by Observers working in co-operation with Snipers and trench mortar officers, who at once opened fire.

Then came the acting, which caused great interest and amusement, combined with instruction. Some of the men had great talent that way, and their topical jokes went down—but when it came to the loophole scene——

Education by Acting. Two young soldiers were mishandling a periscope, doing everything wrong, when one of them saw a Hun showing his head in the German trench opposite. Getting excited he entered the loophole, sacred to Snipers, loosed off 10 rounds rapid, and thus, after having clearly indicated the position of the loophole to Fritz, he retired from it leaving the shutter and screen open, and assuring his companion that he had exterminated the lot. Presently the Sniper came along the trench and inquired what all the firing was. Being suspicious, after a lecture on "giving away" loopholes, and the dangerous work Snipers had in building and concealing them, he had just cautiously entered the loophole when a shot rang out from the German trench and a yell of pain came from inside. Out came the furious Sniper. What he said—that was the trouble.

I had only anticipated such expressions as a Commanding Officer sometimes may hear when Battalion Headquarters have the Signallers' dug-out for neighbour, and the walls are not thick—but on this occasion the flow of abuse completely unmanned me. For a second I lost my head, and then I blew my whistle and sounded the "cease fire." A concluding lecture on the art of training and the scandal of unavoidable casualties, gave me the opportunity of explaining that strong language was not a part of my curriculum.

Some were shocked and some were amused. We all adjourned to a fine tea arranged by Sergt.-Major

Archer at the Town Hall. The Captive Balloon Section provided a ripping Concert ; this, with the Divisional band and dancing up to 9 p.m., terminated a good day's relaxation, and few will forget the method of teaching by acting.

May 6th, 1916.

On the Resting at — the most beautiful place
Road we have yet been in, half farm, half
to Acq. chateau, with a church and Convent next door,
 resting under a copper hazel, laburnums, lilacs,
 variegated maples in a garden with sweet briars
 and flowers, tired out after strenuous months at
 Blangy ; having handed over to Laton Frewen as Col.
 Green was unwell. What a contrast this place makes
 as a rest billet, when compared to some of our
 billets in the mud and everlasting gunning of the
 salient !

Letter to Scout DAVID FINLAYSON, Stirling.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE. *June, 1916.*

MY DEAR DAVY,—The country here is lovely ; there are beautiful woods, all green once more, with beeches, and chestnuts, and hyacinths, and even lily-of-the-valley, growing wild, and all the birds singing away as if there never had been such a thing as war.

I got back after seeing you. You remember the house I told you of, where we climbed up, and looked down on to the Bosche ? Well, it was too much for him. During my absence he sent back for a big trench mortar, and the morning I arrived he threw over 20 large shells—" rum-jars " we call them, big tin cans

holding 60 lbs. of high explosives. There was no house left, just heaps of rubble and debris, a few good Riflemen wounded, and 3 awarded the Military Medal. Then "As you were," and "Carry on" much as before. One of my best Snipers had a narrow escape; a "rum-jar" landed at his feet; he stood there "cut off"; he watched the fuse sparkling and spluttering and felt that his "number was up," and then, paralysed, he realised his good luck—it was a "dud." He has been wounded three times, but he tells me this was his most unpleasant adventure.

In this war you never know what old friends you will meet next. Just now we are resting not very far from where the "Sons of the Rock" are resting too; so I rode over—a jolly ride over an undulating fertile country, with large open fields, wonderfully cultivated by the old people and children. Every man from 18 to 45 is away fighting at the front. You would admire them, working long hours, managing the horses and cattle, harrowing, sowing and rolling large stretches of land, cultivating the rich soil—brave hearts as any at the front. And, just beyond, a party of bronzed and businesslike "kilties"—men you might well feel proud of—farmers, perhaps themselves, from the Carse of Stirling. What are they doing here in France? Look at them throwing bombs, drilling and shooting—fit and cheery, and as hard as nails. They are resting from the trenches, and fitting themselves the better to hold off and turn out the Bosche invader. My Riflemen, too, are a fine lot. I am making good Boy Scouts of them all, and hope many of them will have troops of Boy Scouts after the war.

You would laugh, if you could see my Snipers sometimes, great big fellows, sitting on the "wee kiddies' " benches in the village school, where I often get permission from the school master to lecture and teach them with the help of the blackboard. They look a bit clumsy and cramped trying to squeeze themselves into the seats and write or sketch at the children's desks. One of them upset an inkpot—I could not find any strap in the dominie's desk, so we let him off. The jolly French children, dressed in black smocks, the boys mostly wearing their father's or brothers' light-blue uniform caps, come peeping inquisitively in at the door, wondering perhaps why grown-up men should go to school.

Fancy the poor schoolmaster ! His assistants are all away in the fields or at the war, and he is single-handed with 50 pupils of various ages from 6 to 14. However, he manages. It seems a kind of conjuring trick.

There you see three blackboards : on one pot-hooks and the A B C for the infants ; on another spelling and sums ; and on the third, for the more advanced, is written in French " Anna is a good girl. After school she assists the teacher ; she cleans the desks and dusts the forms ; she rubs the windows and fills the pots with ink ! " Anna is evidently a bit of a Boy Scout doing her good turn—doing her bit in the war. Anyway, I drew my diagrams of trenches and loop-holes on the other two boards. I rubbed out the pot-hooks, the A B C and sums, and left the praises of Anna just as they were. It is well to write a good

hand ; it is very important, too, to get sums right ; but, my dear David, it is even better to do good turns wherever you go through life.

Acq. *June 3rd, 1916.*

Things continue to go A1. The model school, 3 Officers and 60 Riflemen, promises so well ; and the MS. of book on Sniping is practically finished. I shall be glad when E.'s German sandbags and uniforms come, also I would like a false beard and a mask or two. I hope to get a display in a week or ten days.

Acq. *June 4th, 1916.*

The 4th June is round once more (Floreat Etona) it finds me sitting in the schoolmaster's dining-room (writing my book on sniping). The sun comes in at the window, which looks out on to Monsieur's well-kept vegetable garden. At 6 a.m. each morning Madame brings me a very good cup of coffee, puts it on the window sill and, after some cheery talk, leaves me in possession. About 7 I get up and generally have a talk with Monsieur as I dress, while he busies himself with his garden. About 9 the children go into school, Madame takes the little ones, her worst punishment is to make them stand up with a smoke helmet on ! All of them have to carry smoke helmets. Monsieur Astrua takes the bigger ones upstairs, nearly all girls, there seem very few boys. At 11.30, if wet, I take my " gros élèves " till 1 or 1.30 ; they listen like mice, except when they laugh and grow keen and encourage me. They make excellent progress, and will do well when the time comes.

Acq. *June 17th, 1916.*

I have just packed off MS. of book by King's Messenger. Am now safely through the training of Brigade Scouts, the first thing of its kind, and having got my whole soul into it and pumped enthusiasm into the men for four weeks, I feel done up and shall be glad of the comparative rest. Everything has worked together for good and gone well, ending up with most amusing and, at the same time, realistic and instructive display to some 200 people, with glorious sunshine and band playing during intervals; Generals and budding Generals, distinguished and otherwise—all very pleased.

Acq. *June 19th.*

The school is closed now and we go to put into practice all we have taught.

Book on Scouting and Sniping. About this time the proofs of my book on Scouting and Sniping being ready, and special permission having been obtained from General Headquarters at Montreuil, where I paid a personal visit for the purpose, I wrote to General Baden Powell, asking him to write me a few words of Introduction for it.

TO GENERAL SIR R. S. BADEN-POWELL.

June 24th, 1916.

DEAR GENERAL,—The enclosed book having been written to try and help snipers to push on and end the war, I am bringing it out privately, one thousand copies. I owe so much to you that I am wondering if you would read it, and if you approved, write a short introduction. Your Boy Scout idea of teaching

by acting the part has appealed to the Snipers even as much as it does to our boys. I have trained them on Boy Scout lines all through, and found the results simply splendid ; I began the first day by telling them all about the Scout Law and Movement, and ended by enlisting future Scout Masters ! I read the *Gazette* regularly and am glad to know from it that you have not been arrested as a spy. I hope very much that you and Lady B.-P. keep well, only I hear you are both overworked.

Success to the Scouts.

Yours sincerely,

F.M.C.

July 6th, 1916.

MY DEAR CRUM,—Mrs. Stewart has sent me the proofs of your book on Scouting and Sniping, and I must congratulate you very cordially upon it. It seems to me to put the whole idea of this new work most clearly and concisely and on very practical lines ; and the training you propose should, I am sure, be popular, and at the same time effective. I hope the book will be widely read, not so much for your sake, as for the sake of the officers and men who will learn from it.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ROBERT BADEN-POWELL.

To Scout DAVID A. FINLAYSON, 5 Springfield Place,
Stirling.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE. *July 4th, 1916.*

MY DEAR DAVY,—You are my most faithful correspondent of all the Scouts, so I sit down to write again and thank you for your letter. I was so pleased to get it, and so glad to hear that No. 4 Troop had done well collecting sphagnum moss, and that the Kaiser had not dug it all up by the roots before the war. The Germans thought of most things when they were plotting to murder us in Bonnie Scotland, but they seem to have overlooked the sphagnum moss and the Boy Scouts. Yes, I get the *Sentinel* every week, and am always so happy to read in "Delta's" Notes how well all the troops keep going. Tell them all to keep pegging away, and soon we will all come back and help to keep the flag flying. What a fine Rally we will have on Bannockburn Day next year—Robert the Bruce himself will rejoice when he sees us all march past the Borestone—every Troop with flags flying and full ranks of smart Scouts. So keep the pot boiling and the flag flying till we come home again.

Such a noise as you never did hear has been going on for days along miles and miles of front. You will read about it in the papers. The British Lion is roused at last. He gets sad wounds, but he is out to win and means to win and nothing will stop him, I promise you that.

We have been very busy fighting in the air and on the ground and underground. It is exciting work to

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listen to a kind of telephone and hear, quite near, the pick, pick, pick and the shovelling of the Westphalian miners making a shaft to blow you up ; but then we have jolly fine miners too, haven't we, Davy ? In Stirling we know that, don't we ?

Then I have had a turn of excitement in the air. I went up in a balloon like this : (picture)

We reached a height of 3,000 feet, as high as Ben Ledi or Ben Cruachan, and looked down on the terrible fighting below. Squalls came on, and the wind blew to 31 miles an hour. The Captain said : " If she breaks away our only chance is to jump down in parachutes—one for you and one for me." I didn't shake—not half, as they say. But the wind dropped again, and we got down safely.

Lately I have been teaching picked men sniping. We had imitation German trenches, and men dressed up like Germans. It was great fun learning the tricks of the trade. Such a fine lot of men they are. I told them they must all be Scout Masters after the war. Alas ! alas ! five or six have already been hit since then, but I hope they will all recover and be good Scout Masters yet. Then we came to new trenches and searched them well with our telescopes. One of the first things I saw was a poor disabled British aeroplane. It had been for a long time lying in what we call " No Man's Land."

Then I saw some silly Bosches had put up some planks with certain words displayed (picture). Some of the letters were hidden by barbed wire, and stakes and grass, but I expect you could find the missing

words. You can show it to some of the Scouts and see if they can, and tell them P stands for nothing any Britisher is ashamed of, while Kut is a name we are very proud of. Soon, too, we will let the Bosche know what it means to "cut" and run. We'll give him Kut and (h)el(l) and Amara all right.

Then I came on a loophole with my glass. It was hidden something like this in the chalk parapet (picture). I have not the leisure to draw well, but you see the idea. He would poke his rifle through the hole in the steel plate; but we take an elephant gun and bang! —putting a solid steel bullet through his loophole plate and silly pate and all. And so we spent a lot of our time crawling and creeping about in fields of poppies and long grass, reaching mounds from which we can see the wonders of Fritz's temporary lodgings in France. And all the time the larks are singing overhead in the heavens where everything is serene. Well, no more just now. Good luck to you and all the Boy Scouts in Scotland.

Yours as a Scout,

F.M.C.

July, 1916.

On 41st About this time General Skinner, having
Brigade succeeded Lord Binning, invited me to
Staff. join his staff and run the Snipers and Intelligence of the Brigade. The Brigade Headquarters were in Arras with two battalions in the chalk trenches North-East towards Rocquincourt, where mining and countermining were an unpleasant feature. At this time the fighting further South on

the Somme was beginning, and it was known that every battalion would take its turn sooner or later in the great push.

July 2nd.

It goes on every day, such a row as no one has ever heard before, an inferno, and yet no news much. The British tail is up and of that there is no possible doubt whatever. The Lion is bound to suffer more wounds yet, but his tail is up ; he sees the right end in sight, however far away it may be.

LETTER TO SCOUT HEADQUARTERS *Gazette.*

August, 1916.

Life in MY DEAR MR. EDITOR,—What am I to say
Rocque- to you worthy of the *Gazette* ? My head
lincourt is full of nothing but war, and sniping in
Trenches. particular. Nevertheless that glorious in-
 vention—the Boy Scout—is always at the
 back of my mind. I imagine myself back sometimes,
 and see him sitting all eyes, enthusiasm and sympathy
 as one tells him yarns of Fritz as seen in the trenches
 through a telescope—reflected, perhaps, in his own
 periscope. You may see him with fixed bayonet
 and baker's cap standing on sentry or off duty—
 shaving, perhaps, or a cigar in his mouth, reading some
Zeitung full of lies, or maybe a letter from Fraulein
 telling the truth. How interested the Scout would
 be in the various uniforms and badges, the different
 coloured bands and buttons, on the caps. How
 breathlessly he would imagine himself crawling with
 you through the debris of ruined suburbs, or creeping
 disguised through long grass to reach some tricky

vantage point. Yes, the life of a Sniper is one which would appeal to the love of adventure in boys ; but then one has to go easy. I hear someone saying : “ I told you so ; it is a military movement.”

But, besides, sniping is only so small a part of this war. At sea and under the sea, in the air, on land, and worst of all, to my mind, underground, daily encounters take place. How little at ease we feel when out of our element ! We cross the Channel with a lifebelt on—the sea looks very wet and cold. We go up in a balloon, and shake at the thought of its breaking away and a parachute descent. But, worst of all, to a sniper’s mind, is the warfare underground. Down a long dark shaft you find a man bending over a patent kind of stethoscope. You take it and listen ; pick and shovel seem to be working just at your feet. You feel uneasy, then you hear a guttural grumble. Your companion laughs. “ Bauermann,” he says, “ is always a grouser ; he has struck a hard seam, or perhaps he had no sausage to-day.” For just as the British sniper knows Fritz, so the miners, too, have their pals underground.

Then there comes a night—an earthquake shakes the countryside—a pause of silence, then a hell let loose of guns and mortars, “ minnie-woppers,” bombs, and what not. A crater has gone up. Come with me down the long French *boyau* ; the sun is up ; the larks are singing as before. Red poppies and blue cornflowers waving in masses along the maze of white chalk trenches seem, in the name of France, to defy Bauermann and all his evil works. You push on down

the narrow trench, squeezing past good fellows being carried up on stretchers, the nearer you get to the scene the more evident the signs of "strafe." Dug-outs "crumped" in, trench boards and sandbags splintered and scattered, bits of shell and signs of blood wherever you look.

Khaki gangs of diggers are repairing the damage, reopening trenches and renewing cover. All night, by shifts, they have been working hard in spite of shells and sniping. They look up, sweating but smiling, as you pass; gallant fellows, all.

You pass along till there, before you, once a trench is now a mountain of chalk. All around torn accoutrements, khaki, bandages, broken weapons, splinters, blood and flies, and debris. You crawl or bolt across the open, up the exposed hillside of chalk, aware of sniping as you pass into the crater—No. 5 its name is—there you see how busy officers and men, like ants, have been. What a power of work they have put in! in spite of grenades and whizzbangs. Alert, with swords fixed and bombs handy, gazing into periscopes, standing at their posts built in with sandbags, stand the look-out men in khaki—there they stand, 20 yards from the Hun, ready, as ever, to do their bit, whatever that bit may be. A blessing on them all. Truly the more you see of the British soldier out here the more your heart goes out to him.

But what is the British soldier to-day but the British nation in khaki? Moreover, whatever you say of the man at the front holds good still more of the woman at home. And yet there were times when many were

feeling a bit uneasy. They only saw the man who seemed to think of nothing but self, or the spirit which seemed to be dead. But we who followed the Chief—or was it the boys themselves who urged us along?—we pegged away, and ever, according to orders, “kept smiling.” To-day we thank God. Our faces are beaming with smiles of thankfulness and confidence.

As for the *Gazette*, it has done far more than you know. Especially I like the “Two Ideals.” Not being a man of letters or words, I feel inclined simply to say “Hear, hear,” as loud as I can. At any time I am shy—too shy, perhaps—of treading on sacred ground; but I feel with all my faith that in teaching our boys—our future men—religion, you are on the path too many have missed.

We came of our own free wills; we came to say that this sort of thing shall not happen in the world so long as we are in it. We know we are doing right, and I tell you that on this mission on which we have come, so long as every man plays the game and plays it cleanly, he need not fear about his religion—for what else is his religion but that? “*Play the game and God will be with you—never fear.*” These are the words of a fighting Australian padre. Why were there tears in so many big Anzacs’ eyes? Because a man had spoken as a man to men. His secret was out. Christ himself was showing the way.

Yours very much a brother Scout,

F. M. CRUM.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE. *July 4th, 1916.*

July 11th, 1916.

The big strafe goes on steadily, and we get good news of it from time to time and scraps of news about individual friends and regiments doing well, losses, etc. I suppose it is only a matter of time and all will take their turn. I feel the result is sure, though we must not get carried away by good news into thinking it is all up with the Bosche.

I keep pegging away with my Brigade Intelligence and Sniping duties, but at times I feel a kind of sadness, too, at the idea of severing direct connection with the 8/60th, but those things are passing.

As far as I can see, everyone out here does his best, some more fortunate than others in speeding the war to a successful end, and they not necessarily the ones who get most kudos. When you see a long list of honours, multiply it by 1,000, and add the killed, wounded and missing, and then you have an idea of the number of fathers who may rejoice over their sons being able to do their duty at all well.

July 20th, 1916.

July is speeding past and an eventful month it is, one which will probably stand out in the history of this enormous "strafe." The new Army has been let loose, and with it the *Daily Mail* has been engaged. I suppose it will help historians to chronicle great events and deeds; or will it give them a headache when they read of shells "whinnying and neighing" over the *Daily Mail's* head or of individuals modestly mentioning themselves in despatches? I

Roland Philipps. can hear guns thundering at it again. Poor Scout movement, we have lost the good Roland Philipps, who next to Elwes, perhaps, did most to help the Chief Scout in his great work. Lawrence of Edinburgh too, so strong and capable. We lose grand men on all sides, but we gain and push on, the khaki fights its way through Fricourt, Mametz, Trones, to the Bazentin line, struggling in the village mazes and woods, a couple of miles, perhaps; not very far on the road to Berlin, if you look at the map, and yet a very big stride in reality, a gaining of morale, a sort of turning point in this ghastly war.

Here, too, we have our part to play, mines and trench mortars and other tests of nerves and men, how long it may last we do not know. As for myself, I now only go up to the trenches one day on and one day off, for I find I have not the strength to do more.

July 23rd, 1916.

I am doing less because less able ; in fact, the words I used to General Couper (14th Division) the other day were : " The fact is, I feel more easily tired each day. The best thing is if you will write stating my qualifications or disqualifications and asking them to find me a suitable job." Verdant has gone, and Frewen is now in his place, and no doubt Providence will arrange matters as may be best ; who are we to say what is best ?—leading a few good Riflemen in one of the waves that break on the heights of Thiepval, or returning, perhaps, to do a bit more in leading a few boys the right way. It is all one thing, and part of the rising tide.

July 28th, 1916.

We are shedding all superfluous kit.

I have a feeling of unsettledness about me just now, the sort of feeling a faithful dog has when it sees the household packing up.

Aug., 1916.

From this time on, for the doings of the 8/60th and 41st Brigade I must refer my readers to the Regimental Chronicle. With Laton Frewen in command, the Battalion played a great part in Delville Wood, and the Snipers and Scouts did specially good work, but as for myself, alas, I "fell out on the line of march to the Somme." Sad, but true. I had to give in, and come home; indeed, it was fully four months before I could again do an honest day's work.

After three months' leave, while on a visit in Ayrshire, with still time before my sick leave was up, a telegram from W.O. called me back to work.

LETTER TO SCOUTS AT STIRLING.

1st Nov., 1916.

BLANDFORD HOUSE,

N. CAMP, ALDERSHOT.

DEAR SCOUTS,

I was sorry to leave you so suddenly just when we were going to have a week-end together, but a telegram came from the War Office ordering me to report at once. Well, I was a bit surprised, for Dr. Moorhouse had recommended me for a further period of leave to get thoroughly well. Still War Office telegrams have to be obeyed, so off I went that night

by train, reaching the War Office at 10.30 a.m. as ordered.

They took my breath away by saying that if I could pass the doctors, I was wanted to go down to Aldershot and help to teach 300 Colonels. Well, that is a big class, isn't it, of rather elderly pupils?

The thought of it rather made me fear the doctors might find me suffering from nervous shock, for surely it is more alarming to teach 300 Colonels than to charge any Bosche trenches. However, when they listened to my heart with that telephone instrument, which they call a stethoscope, they found it beating normally, they felt my pulse, and I put out my tongue, and hey ! Presto ! before you could say " Jack Robinson " I was driving to Waterloo Station en route for Aldershot, passed " fit for service at home."

I must tell you about the Boy Scout at the War Office. The War Office is full of Boy Scouts buzzing about its endless passages, taking messages and making themselves very useful. One of them, dressed like No. 4 troop, led me up to the room for the medical examination, and there handed me over to another Scout, quite a little chap, who was on day duty there. He was dressed in khaki, like Miss Lorrain's boys. He had been at this job for a year and a half, so he told me. Well, he took my papers and showed me to a seat. There were some 15 other officers all waiting their turn, and I saw to my regret that my papers were put at the bottom of all the others. No help for it, it was a case of " first come, first

served," so I sat down and made up my mind to keep smiling like a good Scout.

"Never mind," I said to myself, "I will light a cigarette and the time will soon pass." I had just lit up and settled down, when I heard a firm command, "No smoking allowed, please, Sir." It was my friend the Boy Scout on duty. I heard him stop a Brigadier-General soon afterwards, in the same way—very smart salute and courteous. So no one took offence, and we all admired the Scout. Isn't that rather a good show, don't you think? "Quite right," I said. I put out my cigarette at once, and then I showed him my Swastika Badge—the one the Perthshire boys gave me you know, the one I showed you which had been my lucky charm all through the war. I said to him, "What good turn are you going to do me now? Don't you think you ought to let me in a place or two earlier out of my turn?" But he was a good Scout; he looked me straight in the face, laughed, and shook his head, saying, "That wouldn't be Scoutlike, and I know you wouldn't like me to do it." "Right you are again," said I, "I must tell the Chief Scout about you."

There are lots of Scouts going about London, and some at Aldershot too, most of them are very smart, though occasionally one sees a slovenly Scout, who is dirty, and has his uniform badly put on, and doesn't salute officers. Probably his Scoutmaster and the Leaders are all away in France. It is a pity because people see him and say, "How sad it is, the Scouts are not what they used to be." I

hope no Scouts in Stirling ever are slovenly, and that they all get a good name everywhere.

I must now be off. It means hard work, but I simply say "*Stick it*" to myself, and somehow I get along, and the work grows easier instead of harder. It is a good plan, try it and see for yourselves. I shall be busy till Christmas, when I hope to get two weeks, and will go up and see you again. So then, good-bye to you all for the present. If anyone likes to write and give me the news; you know I was always glad to hear the latest. What about the patrol competition? I wish to give a prize to the best patrol in every troop. Each Scout should aim at making his own patrol the very best in every subject laid down for the competition.

Yours as a Scout,

F.M.C.

Oct. 10th, 1916 to April 30th, 1917.

Aldershot Senior Officers' School. From Oct. to April I was offered a grand opportunity of promoting the cause of scouting and sniping throughout the Service, for General Reggie Kentish, an old Pretoria friend, having been commissioned to start a new school for training selected officers as Battalion Commanders, invited me to come and help. Originally his idea was that I should try my hand as a regular Instructor, but it was arranged that if this was too strenuous, I should limit my activities to the teaching of my own subject.

General R. Kentish. I suppose that few men in the Army have done so much towards winning the war as this indefatigable Brigadier. Before the war, he was best known in the Army for good work he had done under General Smith Dorrien at Aldershot, in connection with football, having diverted streams, removed several hills, and built some 35 level football fields.

With the Irish Fusiliers, both at Aldershot, and in the early days of the war, he had gained experience and rapid promotion, rising in a short time from Captain to Brigadier.

A man, so original, so pushing, so ready to put new ideas into practice, with such remarkable activity of mind, energy of body, and enthusiasm of spirit, was bound to meet many who shook their heads and disapproved; but as a teacher of leadership and sympathy between officers and men, I think the good he has done, both during the war, and in days to come, is something any man might well feel proud of.

Let me give a sample of one day's work:—From 5 a.m., thinking and writing in bed,—about 7, his typist comes in, and between them they get through piles of correspondence. After breakfast and office, an energetic morning, visiting the various parties of officers scattered at their training over the district. After lunch he would rush off somewhere, perhaps to the military prison, give a good lecture and buck the men up, then in the afternoon you would find him in shorts and Brigadier's uniform, tearing up and

down the field refereeing at some crowded football match, thinking nothing of blowing his whistle, stopping the game and cautioning some All-England player about some irregularity. After a bath and tea he would be off again to the Connaught Hospital, sitting down to the piano and starting a sing-song among the wounded men. Dinner, a cheery party at Blandford House, 2 glasses of port and big cigar ! Then bed at 11 or 12, having put in an hour or two more of work.

I remember, as we two motored up to London next day, warning him that no man could go on indefinitely at such high pressure. " Well," he said, " this war has got to be won, and now's the time. It does not matter what happens to ' Reggie Kentish ' after that." He was utterly out to win the war, and that is what I liked ; with all his push and go, " Kentish " came second.

As for my own work, finding myself very rusty in military Law, Engineering, Tactics, Organisation, etc., and with too little strength to work up and teach these subjects, I gradually became more and more a specialist, taking over the existing Sniping School, building a new range on improved lines, as at Acq, and combining the training of classes of some 60 officers and men, with demonstrations and lectures to the Senior Officers' School and others.

The method of training was new, the Aldershot and W.O. Staff were some of them old-fashioned, (the kind that says, " It never has been done before," or saves itself trouble by telling you, that " sniping

is not the only thing in the world") so that one had to overcome many of the difficulties common to all pioneers.

New methods of Training. I saw the whole thing "in being" long before it took shape. I felt that by acting, and appealing to the imagination, by the imitation German and British trenches, with men dressed up as Huns and as British troops in France, by the use of the cinema and lantern slides combined with lecturing, by the use of black goggles for teaching a man to work in the dark, and by the introduction of jiu jitsu and special training in self-defence, hundreds of lives which were being thrown away each twenty-four hours of the war, might be saved and turned to good purpose. I was lucky in securing assistance and encouragement from Sir Archibald Hunter, and from many up-to-date leaders who visited Aldershot, so that in the end we got together a capable staff (which included two of my good Snipers from France) and most difficult of all, overcame difficulties of expense and establishment, and in the end we became a recognised institution.

Education by Acting. It would be too long a story to give in detail the various scenes which we acted in order to teach, suggestions and ideas were given at the time in various pamphlets which we printed and issued to every officer. It was very soon found, as at Acq, that the men showed talent in the acting and were able to reproduce the exact happenings and mishaps, often combined

with much amusement. Large parties came from all directions and the thing being a novelty, soon became a popular "show." Two hundred and fifty young soldiers, for instance, would be sent to me just before going to France. They would attend a lecture at the local cinema, illustrated with lantern slides and cinema films, and sing a marching song, the words of which were thrown on the screen ; during an interval, they would next march to the Ash ranges where there was room to accommodate them on the grand stand overlooking the trench. Then would take place some scene from trench life, men frying bacon over a brazier, making too much smoke, cleaning their rifles and making mistakes in doing so, which have too often proved fatal, or incautiously exposing themselves and so being hit and carried away on a stretcher ; these and such like scenes, all commented on by the instructor, and acted by old hands, with their own language and jokes, whether they produced loud laughter or seriousness, left an impression which lasted far longer than any amount of ordinary instruction.

The programme was easily varied ; when Artillery Officers came down from the W.O. the play was altered accordingly, *e.g.*, the Snipers are seen with the forward Artillery Officer at some point from which they show him an enemy mortar, then plans are made, and the snipers acting as observers, telephone the results of each shell as it actually bursts in the German trenches opposite. The Battalion Commander comes up, and a friendly conversation takes place,

in the hearing of the audience, illustrating various points and requirements. Finally they go off arm in arm to breakfast, saying that after all, a good breakfast, friendship, and touch are the chief requirements in "co-operation between Infantry and Artillery."

I remember that when Gen. Baden Powell came down with Sir Archibald Hunter we did a special "stunt" in his honour called "Be Prepared!" In this scene the men were *not* prepared, they were collected round a fire, on a cold wet day, singing, cooking, tied up in waterproof sheets, mufflers over their ears, rifles left dirty, or with covers on, and out of reach. The Sentry got "fed up" and joined the party. While all this was going on two escaped Germans are seen by the audience (150 Senior Officers and others) approaching across "no man's land" to the deserted part of the British trench, they have their hands up and are shouting "Kamerad." Finding no one to surrender to, they enter the trench and hide—much to the amusement of the audience. Then an Officer comes along; he breaks up the singing, and puts the Leader under arrest, going off in a bad temper and saying how fatal it might be to be unprepared. His waterproof fits tightly over his revolver, his revolver is unloaded, he passes on. Rounding the next bay he finds himself suddenly confronted by the two Germans. He struggles to get at his revolver, . . . the Huns relieve him considerably by telling him they come from Alsace and are harmless.

There are always some who disapprove of anything new, and I remember on this occasion there were those who took exception to this scene, and said it lowered the Officer in the esteem of his men ! However I was consoled when Gen. Baden Powell told us, in speaking a few words to the audience after the performance, that he himself as a subaltern at Aldershot had got into serious trouble, when through some original and amusing ruse he had outwitted an opposing Commander. His originality had drawn down the wrath of his Commander, but the approval of Sir Evelyn Wood. "I am glad," said the Chief Scout, "to see that nowadays troops are not afraid to combine a good laugh with Instruction."

As I say, the show became popular. The Duke of Connaught, Prince Albert, Sir Wm. Robertson and other Generals, distinguished Admirals, and others came and all approved. A surprise visit from the Bishop of Winchester perhaps caused the greatest flutter among the actors, for they were not so sure of themselves before such an audience. I did not find that these performances, which lasted an hour or so, interfered in any way with the rest of the training. On the contrary they accelerated the training.

Black Goggles. One night when lying awake, thinking of night patrolling and the numberless avoidable casualties which were constantly taking place through want of proper training, the idea came to me, "why not train men with

darkened glasses to give the effect of night, while the Instructor would be able to see and correct mistakes?" For the next week, all London was searched, but it was only possible to secure 12 pairs of black glass acetylene-workers' goggles. They were needed for other purposes. The ministry of munitions blocked the way. With the available glasses, the experiment was tried and found most promising; but the danger of a rough and tumble fight with glass goggles, the prohibitive price, and the difficulty of securing the glasses again blocked the way.

F.M. Sir Wm. Robertson. Sir Wm. Robertson was to visit my school next day, and I re-

member, as I was shaving that morning, looking at myself in the glass and saying—"black goggles"—"see you get the idea taken up before I see you tomorrow." The great man came. It was part of his official visit to Aldershot, as Chief of the Staff. He had thousands of other and far more important matters on hand. He went up to the British Observation Post, and was given a look at the German trenches, . . saw the Huns reflected in their own periscope, visited the trenches, saw the Germans in their trench, saw the concealed British snipers' loopholes, nearly put his foot on a concealed camouflaged Sniper, watched some good shooting on the range, which was camouflaged to look like German trenches, then to finish up with, he watched a night patrol encounter between 6 Canadians and 6 others with the black goggles on. At any opening I had been telling him I wanted him to see the idea,

and at last as he left I put in a final word, so he turned to his Staff Officer, amused, I think, and told him to make note of it. As he left I remember in shaking hands and thanking me he said, "It is all very interesting, but there are so *many* things to teach."

The thought of *saving time* in war
Time is Money. is a thought which goads the good soldier along. To me those goggles meant men. The next step was a visit to Sir Ch. Stuart-Wilson and through him direct to the head of the Optical Department of the Ministry of Munitions in London. How impossible it would be if every man with a fad of his own were to short-circuit and urge his particular scheme on heads of departments in this way ! And yet, had one dealt through the post and proper channels, what sort of chance did one stand ? In the end a good celluloid glass was evolved and thousands of pairs were sent out to France. It is a question how far one is right to push in such a case, I felt convinced that, on the whole, in this case, it was right.

Letters. It may be of interest to give a few extracts from letters during this period. They will show how many an officer must have felt at times during this long war and how in the end he was able to struggle through ; there may be side lights too on that excellent "Senior Officers' School."

BLANDFORD HOUSE, ALDERSHOT. *October 15th.*

The Staff and Instructors here are a splendid lot of fellows, many of them old friends ; you would have seen some long faces the first day when Kentish

unfolded to us his syllabus. I drew a large pile of military books on many subjects. I can put my finger on only two or three in which I feel competent to teach anyone anything.

November 16th, 1916.

A great many letters asking for my book, but in meantime W.O. have written me asking on whose authority I wrote it—this after having made a special expedition to G.H.Q. in France and got leave—anyway they say “no more to be issued”—too late, for I have given away nearly all the thousand copies. I am building a range, same as in France and overcoming many difficulties, all going well. Start to-day with 70, to-morrow with 200 men (in spite of there being “no men available”). I have got Corporals Hicks and Elliott from France and Matthews; also Legard at W.O. and Kentish here, help me to push things; somehow I feel it will be a success.

ARMY AND NAVY CLUB. *November 26th.*

Just had a talk with Divisional Commander, General Shute,—it helps to realise modern methods when he tells you he was wired for from France, got into an aeroplane, was at a Divisional Conference a few hours later, and they were carrying all before them soon afterwards.

December, 1916.

Towards Christmas the first course of the Senior Officers' School came to an end. The sniping range was completed and ready for two days of demonstrations by 22nd Dec. The demonstrations were preceded by lectures on Scouting, and cinema and lantern

lectures on sniping in trench warfare, and jiu jitsu. The course was voted a success, and it was very sure that the splendid body of budding Colonels who went back to command in every division would be more in sympathy with the art of Scouting and Sniping, so little understood or encouraged at that time by most Battalion Commanders.

In the second course, from Jan. to April, still further good progress was made, till at last, in May 1917, I was invited to go to G.H.Q. in France as "Scouting and Sniping Expert" to help to organise some uniform system of working throughout the five armies.

April 18th, 1917.

I must thank you for all your help (sandbags, etc.). I have been getting on better even than usual, of late. Splendid progress in handing over the School. In order to get continuity of system, I have now got the four incoming Officers living together with Cozens-Hardy, Davis and myself and a 60th Sniping Officer, Davidson, who was at Arras with me. So we 8 together are training 64 Officers, N.C.O's and men, all very good and keen picked men from all parts including Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa.

Handing over I have written to Gen. Solly Flood (Director of Training in France) to say I can be ready **School.** on or after 7th May, when we shall have handed over, and ensured efficiency here.

Yesterday we had "Osaka's" Jiu Jitsu and some sniping and scout training taken on the cinema, so if we

all "go West" to-morrow, our system could go on ! Also W.O. are pushing the black goggles idea, which I feel will save hundreds of lives. I am *very* thankful.

On Saturday, I had the Boy Scouts of the Reformatory and used them in giving a demonstration as before. They were splendid and enjoyed their small selves enormously and much entertained the class. On Sunday, I went up and talked to them during their evening service. Something, Roland Philipps, perhaps, prompted me to propose it to Mr. Morgan and he was pleased, the boys, too ; I spoke of "Friendship," of Laton Frewen's wedding and my responsibilities as best man, which amused them, then of being buried in a dug-out with Laton, and of the Doctor's Military Cross,—and lastly the Padre's words at the wedding—"It is a duty to love one another." A jolly audience, Roland Philipps' challenge shield hanging up on the wall.

May 14th.

A run to Scotland.

May 17th.

Arrived at G.H.Q. Montreuil.

May 17th to Nov. 10th, 1917.

G.H.Q. The work for which I was now sent out to **France.** France was to carry out the "co-ordination" for which I had always been agitating. There were at the time five Schools of Sniping, one in each of the five armies ; each of these Schools was working on its own lines, some devoting special attention to the scientific side of shooting and telescopic rifles, some making a speciality of observation, and some

of camouflage. The wish of the Training Authorities was to introduce more night patrol work and open warfare scouting and sniping. The days of trench warfare seemed numbered and it was not considered advisable to keep a special staff merely for training in scientific marksmanship. The tendency at that time was to do away with the specialist and make men all-round handy men. How far it was possible to turn out men efficient both in sniping and scouting, were questions on which experts did not agree, any more than they did when it was laid down that an Infantry soldier must be efficient in bombing and Lewis gun as well as with bayonet, rifle, and the rifle grenade ! The " powers that be " at G.H.Q. at the time were not in favour of sniping at all as a separate art, they were set on further training in Scouting, in which we had been found sadly deficient in those glimpses of open warfare afforded on the Somme, at Wytschaete Hill and further North. Thus at the outset one had to find out what was possible, and then how best to secure the soundest compromise in training. One difficulty was that the authority of the Training Staff at G.H.Q., being newly established, old established Army Schools, and Corps and other schools of all kinds, often thought they knew better than G.H.Q. Possibly they did, sometimes, anyway. The process of co-ordination of all Education and Training was then at an early stage. My six months were taken up with four separate steps. Firstly, I spent two months visiting Army Schools, Corps and Divisional Headquarters, with occasional visits to Brigades

and Battalions along the Front. In this way one came into touch with the views of all kinds and conditions of men. The next step was to hold a Conference of Experts in Scouting, Sniping and Observation at Boulogne, where the various views were discussed. Thirdly, at Bouchon, after training a dozen young soldiers with the help of expert Officers and N.C.O's, I was able to work out and demonstrate to representatives of each Army H.Q. and Sniping School a suitable system of intensive

**The first
Official
Book on
Scouting.**

training in Scouting. Lastly with the help of other experts and the experience gained, my time was taken up with the completion of an official book on "Scouting, Sniping and Observation," which became known as "SS 195." This was the first official book ever produced by the Army on the subject and is therefore of interest.

I do not know how far you care to come with me and enter into my thoughts and feelings at this time, but perhaps a few extracts from letters may be of interest.

Letters.

May 16th.

Arrived Montreuil G.H.Q., 10 p.m., met by car and found Gen. Solly Flood and Gerald Dalby at work, explained matters and received me very kindly.

May 21st.

I write from (38th Welsh) Divisional H.Q. The Commander, Gen. Blackader, is an old South African

friend. Yesterday I lunched with Gen. Jeudwine, 55th Div. who also was very good to me. It is a little shy work, constantly visiting new messes with new faces, though all are very hospitable. Have visited many old haunts in the line.

2ND ARMY SNIPING SCHOOL,

MONT DES CATS.

May 25th,

Getting on well, Major Sclater and all his staff good friends. Have just completed a long report on experiences with 2nd Army.

1ST ARMY SNIPING SCHOOL,

LINGHEM

June 2nd.

Billetted in a farm, windows looking out on farm-yard one side, and on town-hall the other side. The way to my room is through the farm kitchen where a large family collects for supper about 9.30 p.m. after a tremendous long day's work in the fields, for they are all up at 4 a.m. From my window I see the children inspanning and driving off a big cart horse, and feeding the hens and rabbits and pigs. They make me feel ashamed to be seen in bed at 6 a.m. in pyjamas with a cigarette. Wonderful people, and so pleased if you just say anything to them. I am not really so idle as they probably think, for as I said to them, we were all helping to "chasser les sales Bosches pour la belle France." Here lives a sniping enthusiast, Major Hesketh-Pritchard. On the 4th I go off on a tour of visits.

June 9th,

WITH 29TH DIVISION. GENERAL BROADWOOD.

Just finished two days with this Division which I helped at Aldershot in training its snipers. It has been very hot, and my expeditions down to the trenches (and Armentières) though very interesting are warm work. Many remembered me, and it was an entirely new bit of country to me. Tomorrow I go to Canadian Sniping School. The noise of the Wytschaete explosion was terrific. The night before last a Corps General (Haking) put me up, and the three days before that I was the guest of Gens. Hordern and Holland, the one a brother officer, the other I used to play polo with at Malta. In fact it is difficult to remember where one has been and whom one has met. It helps me a lot with my work of course, meeting men who know, and are keen; and one sees things in truer perspective; but to be always a guest and overcome one's natural shyness in each new circle, is to me a little difficult. Many people would give worlds for the job I am doing! I am absorbing all the time, rather than giving out anything, but I expect something will come of it.

ARRAS, BLANGY, ROCQUELINCOURT.

June 17th.

The visits to the old trenches most interesting and instructive, wonderful to see the work the Bosche had put in under our noses. A large concrete officers' dug-out built not 40 yards from our front line and all their trenches well built, with bricks and mortar and endless concrete sniping and ob-

serving loopholes from which they had shot many good Riflemen. The visit to Rocquelinourt was interesting too, I spent a day exploring craters and mines, and loopholes, emplacements, dug-outs, and forward saps and wire, all very instructive, then I went on (towards Oppy) and visited the beloved veteran Battalion of the War, the 1/60th, where I had tea. In the evening I dined with Ian Stewart, now a Brigadier General on the Staff of the XIII. Corps. To-day should bring me near 8/60th, but my plans are uncertain, and difficulties in getting motor or transport delay me. My report on 3rd Army shows I have learned a lot and not lost the exceptional chance given. I could never have written it a month ago.

June 21st.

3rd Army School and Sniping School, Auxiliary and Army H.Q. at Albert.

5TH ARMY SNIPING SCHOOL.

June 23rd.

Major Mickie (a good Scot). Tomorrow 14th Division at Marieux, and after that 4th Army School at Toutencourt.

Shall be glad when our tour is completed, so much in it all, new places and people each time. You see they do not know I am only working on one cylinder.

AMIENS. *July 13th.*

I asked them to look out for a younger and more vigorous man to carry on the system once started.

4TH ARMY SCHOOL,

July 18th.

I have a feeling the Conference 21st—24th will go well, though I personally feel little up to conducting it, for I have felt stupid and tired for a long time and feel like a ship waiting for a breeze, or a car waiting for petrol; however, I have the lusty Cozens Hardy with me doing Secretary A fine young fellow doing A1 work.

BOULOGNE. *July 24th.*

To-day finds me finished with Conference, a landmark in the story of sniping and scouting. All of them went away well pleased.

4TH ARMY SNIPING SCHOOL, BOUCHON.

August 2nd.

We expect to be here 3 weeks experimenting with a dozen young soldiers. I have Cozens Hardy to help and two keen and capable Sergeants, Hicks and Barry. Began preparing the ground to-day. It is a beautiful little French village in a narrow valley, off the Somme valley, the steep chalk slopes act as good butts for our shooting.

August 12th, 1917.

I write this from bed, not the bed of sickness, but of laziness—8 a.m. this Sunday morning, St. Grouse's day, 1917 . . . three years of war completed. . . . A little room but a big and comfortable bed, the window open looking out on to the inevitable French farm yard, the hens and pigs and geese and manure heap, all complete. The sound of clogs and a cackle of patois French from an old couple

in the kitchen next door. Matthews has been in smiling, as usual, and given me coffee, and a cigarette. Does that sound like the hardships of war?

I think our experiment here will prove a success. We are eliminating all but the salient points to be taught, and with the help of the Amiens Camouflage experts, introducing new dodges for teaching the use of ground. It is quite like old times teaching young, keen Scouts, and reminds me of Himalayas and Hills, and many a happy day when I used to challenge and beat my Company racing down and across and up khuds some thousands of feet deep.

August 29th.

All going A1 and a very good show, and just what is wanted. Three demonstrations very much approved by experts. Just finished showing round 5th Army School delegates, all very pleased, as also were 3rd Army and 4th Army Generals and Staff. On Friday, G.H.Q. come to see, and on Sept, 2nd our circus leaves for Linghem to demonstrate to 1st and 2nd Armies.

September 2nd.

General Solly Flood and Dalby came down from G.H.Q. and were delighted with it all, like others, keen to lose no time in spreading this training. They are also keen for me to get on with this book.

BOULOGNE. *October 8th, 1917.*

Have been able to work without stopping from 28th Sept. Ten days here, 4 in Scotland, 2 in the train and travelling, and four at Linghem, say three weeks in all, and the MS. is complete

MONT DES CATS. *October 14th, 1917.*

Here by the old Mill, I sit perched up—away below are Poperinghe, Ypres, Messines, the whole salient spread out like a map; a band is playing popular tunes to some tired Battalion resting in billets, where all are rejoicing at the return of the sun after days of dreadful rain and mud, and far away beyond, the guns are booming.

Yesterday I revisited Hooze and away beyond. It is good for one to go. It reminds one of what our grand fellows go through in their terrible mud and shell-hole life. It reminds one that the Bosche has not run out of ammunition. We are apt to forget. It is good to have it brought home what a far more comfortable life one has led away from the line, for though one never forgets, one fails to realise. I tried to visit Sanctuary Wood, where Wm. John Davies lies, and Zouave Wood, where Kenneth fought, but the place was being so straffed, it was impossible. There is nothing left of anything. Woods are but a name for a few stumps of dead trees. Where once I scouted and scrambled through fresh green forest of undergrowth, to-day there is no trace of anything—just a higgledy-piggledy jumble of shell holes and mud and ruins. Such a scene of desolation never was seen as these shell-swept areas. It makes one think; rather, it stops one thinking! This war is too vast to realise.

November—December, 1917.

The Scout Movement during the War. About this time my compass began to wobble. I found myself strongly tempted to return from the Army to my labour of love with the Boy Scouts.

I seemed to have completed the work given to me to do—the five schools were now in touch and working on one system with an official Manual completed. I felt no special call to go on soldiering, whereas in the Scout Movement the loss of Leaders, absent at the war, had thrown a heavy strain on the Chief and those able lieutenants who were left to help him. They had kept the flag flying, but under great difficulties. And surely never had there been greater need for providing good leadership for boys. Fathers and elder brothers away from home, mothers working at munitions, and the boys themselves being in great demand and earning fancy wages, it was no wonder that complaints of “youthful crime” and “lack of discipline” were becoming serious. To those who looked ahead, the Scout Movement seemed to be called upon by Heaven itself to make a special effort, not only to stick it, but to go forward with increased energy. In connection with this move I received many letters from the Chief, from Elwes and others, which, as I say, made my compass wobble.

“You have done your bit” wrote the Chief, (Sept. 1917) “more than anyone could have hoped for when you have been so physically unfit for the strain. . . . If you ever return to Scout work, you can do

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so with a very clear conscience, and personally, I feel that you can do a bigger national work there, so take a rest now and save yourself, there is a grand job before you."

Again in November :—"I have been thinking a good deal since you saw me the other day. There are big things in my mind for the Scout Movement if only we can rise to the occasion, but we are tied down for want of Scout men, and yet the present moment is our big opportunity. It is little short of criminal to let it go by. There is such a vital need for a movement to get hold of the boys at this moment. We *could* do if we moved but all are tied by their other work. I cannot do the necessary visiting and giving the buck up all round, single handed."

No wonder that the Chief, who was doing the work of three men, was needing assistance, and no wonder that I, having completed the work given to me to do in France, and feeling no definite call to any special usefulness with the Army, no wonder that I found myself in doubt. On the other hand, though the worst seemed over at the time, yet who could visit Paschendale, or live at G.H.Q., or come into touch with the continued calling up and training of men, and yet more men, at home, without feeling doubt as to which way duty lay?

The Italian Debacle. Then, unexpectedly came the release of German troops from the Russian front, and the sudden Italian debacle.

Doubt disappeared, and the compass again set

steadily, pointing to the task of training men to kill, rather than to the happier work of teaching boys to live. It was up to every mother's son to do what he could to stand up against the Hun.

At Sheerness. Feb.—April, 1918.

But it was not for some months that I was able to take up work again, and after many medical boards, found myself at Sheerness with the 5th K.R.R. Depot Battalion under my old friend, Colonel Parker Jarvis. I do not think that the average civilian, or even soldiers themselves who only went through the war amid the more exciting scenes nearer the front, will ever realise the splendid work done by regular Officers and N.C.O's at these depot Battalions. To me it was an eye-opener, and I take this opportunity of paying a special tribute to Cols. St. Aubyn, Brownlow, and Parker Jarvis, and to all their staff, for the patient, valuable work which they did in training, equipping and sending out a steady flow of good men to make good the enormous casualties of over 20 Battalions of Riflemen. It was the training and spirit at these depots which alone made it possible to keep up the wonderful traditions of the 60th Rifles. The drudgery and constant grind of training new men and New Army Officers, in drill, shooting, bombing, gas, Lewis guns, rifle grenades, signalling, and in the Rifleman's traditions, was a very high test of efficiency and perseverance. But added to all this there were endless new orders, and changing regulations, and conundrums—questions as to classification of recruits, medical examinations, and conditions of discharge.

Then on the top of it all there were constant bombing raids, and false alarms of raids, at night, so that life at Sheerness often meant for some of the Staff a twenty hours day of work for seven days a week !

I very soon saw that it would take a better man than myself, a much longer time than I proposed to stay at Sheerness, to master the intricacies of mobilising and training and equipping and demobilising gallant Riflemen, so with every assistance from the C.O. I confined myself to establishing an intensive system of training young soldiers, so that they should go out to France and be some use as Scouts. The System included all that I had learned from experience in France and past experience in training. The young Riflemen were as keen as could be, and the good results astonishingly satisfactory.

A course of 14 days was finally decided on, demonstrations, and lectures were given, and the system duly reported to the War Office. I think, that though circumstances prevented this system of training being taken up, it was to me the most satisfactory piece of work I was able to do during the war.

The German Advance. On the 23rd of March the threatened storm broke and the Hun burst through at St. Quentin. For the time being all training was at a standstill. Every available man who was fit was sent at once to France, and many were sent who were not fit. Many poor fellows, even those who had been wounded 3 or 4 times already, went off to do whatever they might be able to do. The young soldiers were splendid, what did

they care for German shells or gas ! they were going to France six months before they had expected and their keenness knew no bounds. Their enthusiasm was enough to start the engine by itself. It was a heartening sight to see such fine young fellows, so splendidly trained and fit, and bound to spread their own enthusiasm ; and yet, I know I was not the only old soldier who found it hard to see them off and say good-bye.

Lecturing for the War Office. In April I was offered and accepted the task of lecturing on Sniping and Scouting to the various Officer Cadet Battalions scattered all over the country.

It was work well suited to a free-lance like myself, for while it gave me the chance of forwarding better work in this direction, throughout the army, it also gave me the chance of improving and developing my experiments with the cinema as a means of teaching. And it gave me great chances of doing what I could to help the Boy Scout Movement. Indeed I had fallen on my feet.

Training. I hesitate to prolong these notes on the war, and yet some words should be added on training.

Who, when I was a subaltern, ever thought that we officers of the Old Army should be called upon to play such an important part as teachers ? Indeed, I may add, which of my tutors, when I was a boy, would ever have looked on me as a possible Instructor !

And yet we Army Officers, having learned a good deal from mistakes and experience, in the end were

able to do good work in this direction. As a subaltern, riding, shooting, and sport were my chief training for war. There was a bit of soldiering to be done certainly, but that was allowed to come second. It was left to the average young officer on joining to pick up what he could. Certainly we were never taught *how to teach*.

Then came a time of more serious views of life, and the South African War. In the Regiments soldiering was made more of a profession. There was a stir up all round and the Army Officer lived with promotion examinations hanging over his head even till his hair had turned grey.

Yes, we had to work mighty hard and study a hundred and one subjects, but still the art of Leadership was never taught.

It is said that teaching and leadership are gifts, and no doubt the best teachers and leaders are born rather than made, but a certain amount of training will save much time and endless mistakes. Time and mistakes are costly in war. Therefore I think that for this, and for every profession, some training in leadership should be given.

Personally, I had some practice in training both British and Native Scouts in the Himalayas and Plains of India, but what taught me most of what proved useful during this war was Sir Robert Baden Powell's wonderful book—"Scouting for Boys."

**The Boy
Scout System
of training.**

I had read this book, if once, at least 25 times, and had spent three years putting the system of training into practice with a few Boy Scouts

in Scotland and I do not think the Army Training Staff could do better than read this book carefully and then visit some good Troop of Boy Scouts.

They would be astonished to see how a good Patrol Leader sets about training the boys of his patrol, interesting them and making them keen; explaining and demonstrating, then making them do the thing whatever it is, for themselves, and finally sending them out into the world to keep their eyes open for opportunities of practice, combined with some good turns.

The Aldershot System of Training. The system of training adopted at the Senior Officers School, was known as the "Theory, Demonstration, Practice" system, and it was on those lines that we worked at our Sniping School.

The conditions were exceptional, there was so much to teach and so little time available.

It was therefore only possible to concentrate on the essential points; one had to think out and teach a sound system, to interest the pupil and make the subject as simple and clear to him as possible, to inspire in him enthusiasm and the wish to excel, and all the time to bring on leadership and the art of training others as far as was possible. All talking was followed by demonstration and practice. Finally the pupil was launched out to the front, where, all too soon, the "real thing" gave him every chance of further practice.

The use of the Cinema for Teaching. Any good teacher will tell you that twice as much can be done by appealing to the eye as well as the ear.*

Where would the dominie be without his maps and blackboard and coloured chalks?

In all my lectures I found it of the greatest assistance to show lantern slides with plans and pictures of real loop-holes made by my Scouts at the front, with reports, trenches, disguises, aeroplane photographs, etc., etc. It was also possible to use the screen as a blackboard by means of specially prepared lantern slides; but *the* discovery to me was the extraordinary value of moving pictures as a means of appealing to the imagination and making things clear. This I first learned from Sergt. Nuthall, of the South African Light Infantry, more commonly known by his professional "jiu jitsu" name of "Osaka."

Poor little chap (he weighed under 9 stone though he could play with heavy weight men) he was killed by a shell towards the end of the war. Like most of us, he had his faults, but he certainly had a genius for teaching his art. He was keen and made others keen, he was thoroughly master of his subject; he was quick, original, and full of humour. He had a gift for acting and showing by contrast

* "Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quae
Ipse tradit spectator."

HORACE.—*Ars Poetica*, 180-1.

the right and the wrong way of doing things. One good lecture with his film at the local cinema hall, then the class would fall in outside only too eager to experiment on each other. As ducklings take to water, so Osaka's pupils took to jiu jitsu—indeed my chief anxiety was lest some good fighting man should end his days prematurely on Ash ranges.

With "Osaka" and others we set about making new films and soon with the help of the "Kineto" Company, we were able to reproduce on the screen all that we had found so useful in teaching by acting.

"A new idea." Then Lieut. Davies hit on a new way of showing the plan of ground with the Scouts moving over the map according to ground, and according to the movements of enemy Scouts. This moving diagram was followed by pictures of the Scouts of both sides actually carrying out the patrol, stalking, or running, or hiding according to the situation.

In April, 1917, we made our first film, but greatly improved on this later on. Many an hour did Davies and Wilson and myself spend in that dark room in Wardour Street, experimenting and working out those films. In March, 1918, at Sheerness, and in June, 1918, at Colchester, we were able to develop this idea, with other improvements, and in the end produced films which earned approval in all directions, as a valuable aid to training.

**Lectures to
Cadet Officers
and Others.**

Armed with my films and lantern slides and black goggles, I spent the time from April to October, 1918, touring all over the country,

from Bath to Invergordon, from Sheerness to Gales, seeing a good deal of the "old country" as it was in war-time, and giving lectures in Cinema halls and demonstrations in the open, to thousands of fine young fellows, the pick of the manhood of the Empire. A look at my diary reminds me of much uncomfortable travelling, few trains and fewer porters. There were several visits to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, cadets in khaki seemed to have completely replaced undergraduates in cap and gown. Aldershot, Romford, York, Chatham, Cannock Chase, Wimbledon, etc., etc., were large military centres swarming with khaki. Scotland was full of khaki,—everywhere khaki.

The audiences varied just as men vary. The Cadet Battalions seemed to reflect the character of their Commanding Officer, with some, one felt at home at once, some were stiffer and took more knowing.

I remember some 1,500 Guardsmen in London, seated in gilt chairs at the Victoria Palace of Varieties, rather stiff and "on parade" at first, and how I felt the contrast at their Depot at Caterham, with an evening audience of 1,500 more of them, cheery and "off parade" and less formal. It is easier to teach a man to think for himself, as Scouts must do, if you get him away from "the position of attention."

I remember too, at Aberdeen, a splendid audience of over 1,200 Gordon Highlanders. How they did listen and laugh and cheer! At the end I told the Colonel it was one of the best audiences, and quite

the best cinema hall, I had come across in my wanderings. At the close of the lecture he told his men this, and finished up with the comment which raised a perfect storm of applause—"not bad," said he, "for a little fishing village."—This puzzled me till the Colonel explained that some English Staff Officer had thus belittled their famous granite city.

Twice I revisited the Senior Officers' School at Aldershot, founded by Kentish, finding each time a new Commandant and new classes of Senior Officers, but each time a warm welcome and much encouragement. On these occasions I was also able to fit in cinema talks to younger audiences—the Farnborough Orphan School, and the school children of Farnham. There were visits too to New Zealanders, Anzacs, Canadians, and every kind of British soldier. One thing stands out in my mind and that is the genuine interest taken by old and young, and by all ranks. If you want to interest and grip your audience, try the cinema as an aid; and do not be afraid of a good laugh; these cinema films never failed to help me to teach by raising a laugh at certain points (a very good thing during the anxious days of March and April, 1918). It is a good thing too for the lecturer to be human and in touch with his hearers.

Thus from April to October it was given me to speak to audiences of some 25,000 men, most of them leaders of men. My subject was "Scouting and Sniping," but to me these were but a stepping stone to higher things—for who could speak to leaders of men at such a time without some word of leadership—and where is leadership without character?

At the War Office I had so many friends that in the end I could have found my way unaided by Scouts, or Girl Attendants, or Commissionaires, to almost any part of that rabbit warren, so that I was ever in touch and up to date with the latest news. The grave anxiety in April, the better outlook in June, or the retiring of Bulgaria, in September. Thus in going forth to speak to thousands of men in khaki, who in turn would speak to tens of thousands of civilians, I was acting the part of a liason Officer. It was up to me to "keep smiling" and give a good lead.

October 1918. In October good news poured in from every front but at a terrible cost of gallant lives. In Officers alone it was no uncommon thing to read of 450 casualties in one day's list. I was able to get Captain N. Cozens Hardy and another expert Scout Officer, and show them my plans and methods of lecturing in some final lectures at Cambridge, and thus ensure full use being made of the films now handed over to the War Office.

On 1st Nov. (together with General Ludendorf) I finally took leave of the Army, and returned to my Scouting in Scotland. It was difficult to realise my army work was really finished.

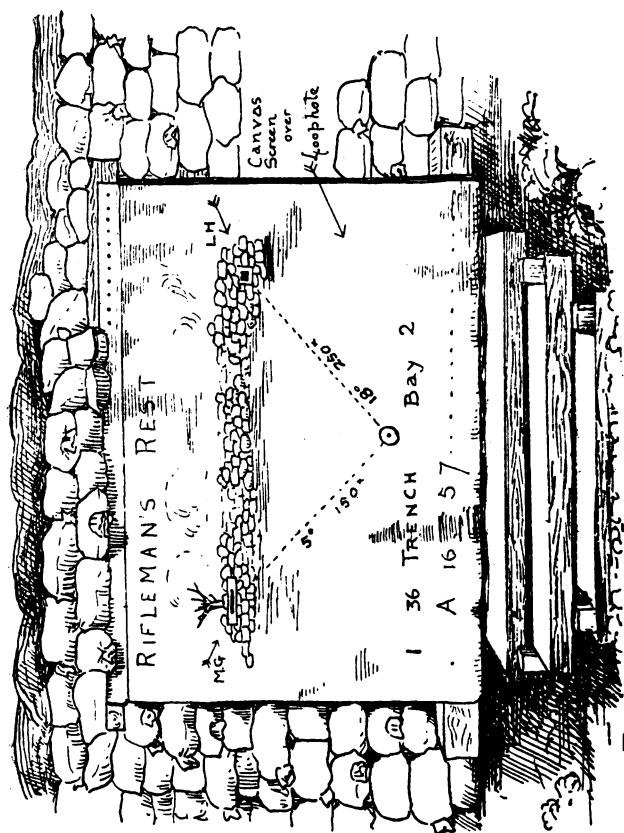
With the incentive of war removed, I seemed to collapse. My whole machinery needed a rest. I was packed off to Miss Absolon's Nursing Home in Edinburgh, and there on the 11th November,

I heard from my bed the great British and American Fleets at Rosyth announcing the Armistice.

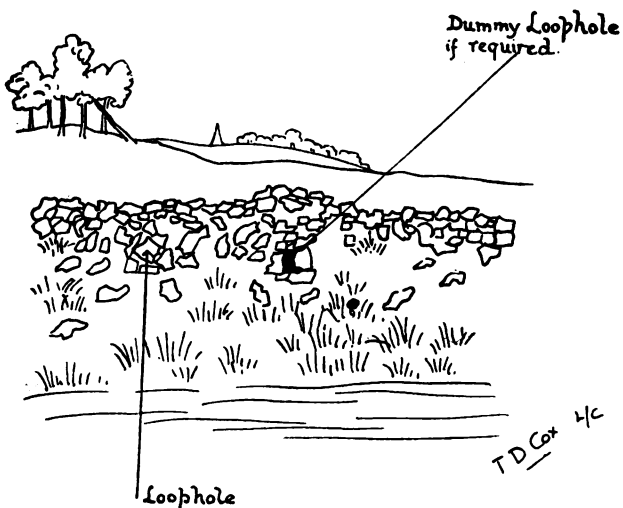
There was plenty of noise and shouting, but I felt too tired to shout. Then after weary weeks of resting, I returned to the outside world, and tried to buck up, but I felt like a man in the ring who is down, trying to rise once more. It could not be done.

Again I returned to the Nursing Home. My old wound had gone wrong and gave me great pain. On 30th January, 1919, Sir Harold Stiles operated with great success. He found the inside of the bone of my arm to be full of poison, every known germ, and these for a long time back had been my handicap : once they were removed, I mended quickly.

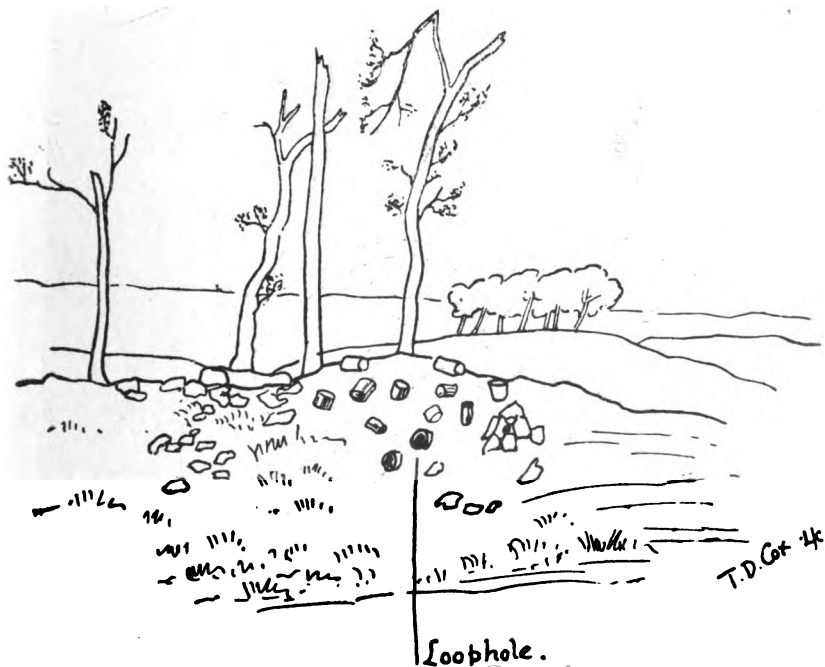
By May I was back and happy once more with my Scouts, sharing with them in camp the joys of "Peace" and "Victory Days." And so in the end, the sun came showing through the storm. In the end we came out smiling.



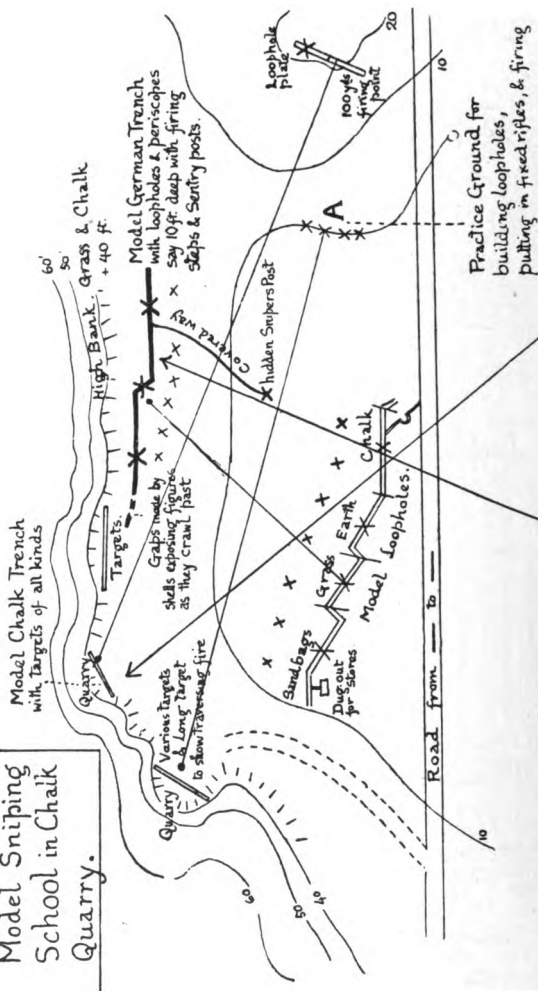
Screen over Sniper's Loop-hole.



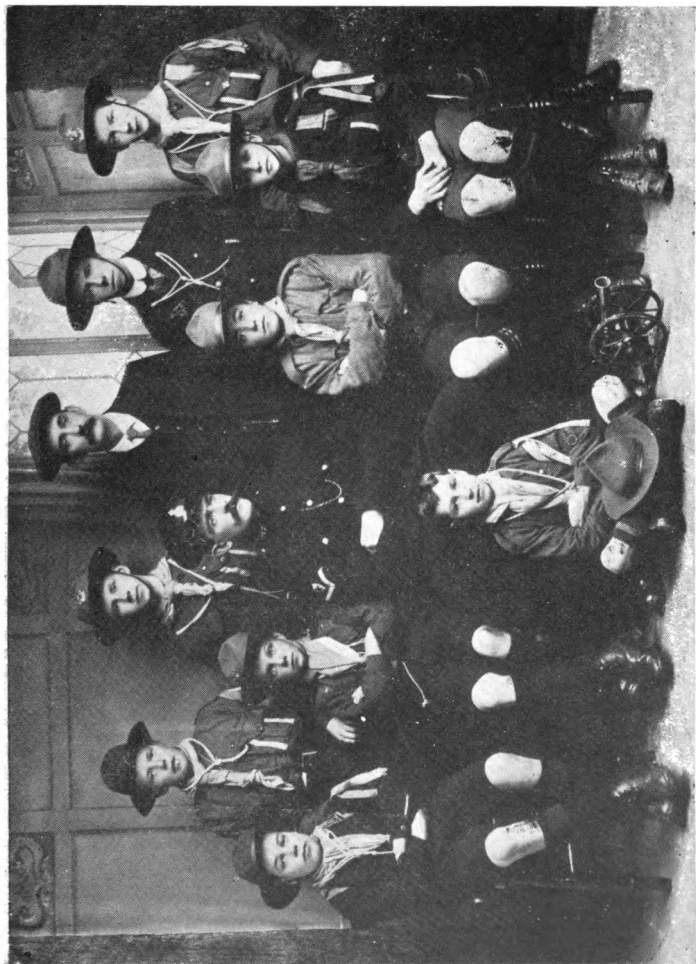
Loophole in Earth and Chalk Parapet.



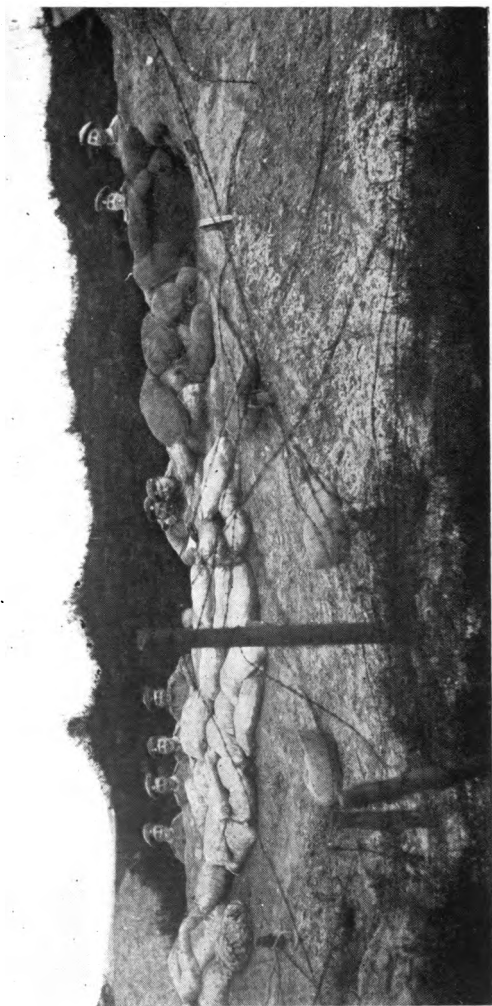
Model Sniping School in Chalk Quarry.



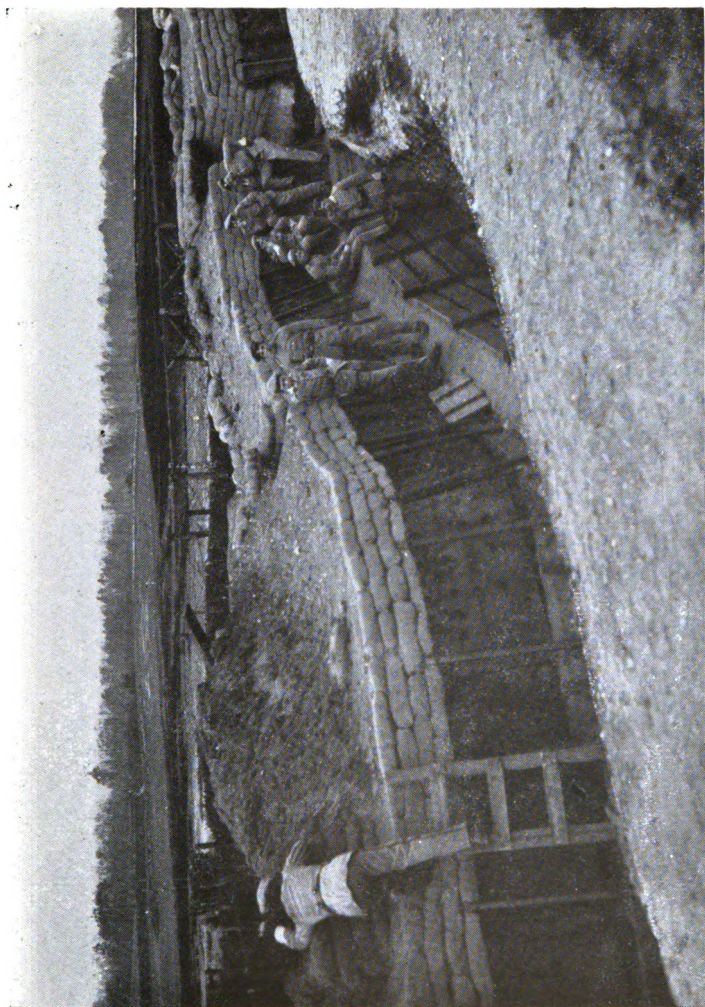
Sketch of Acq Sniping School.



1. Scouts who helped at Recruiting Office, Coatbridge, August, 1914.



2. Imitation; German Trench. Aldershot Sniping School, 1916,



3. Interior of Imitation German Trench, Aldershot.



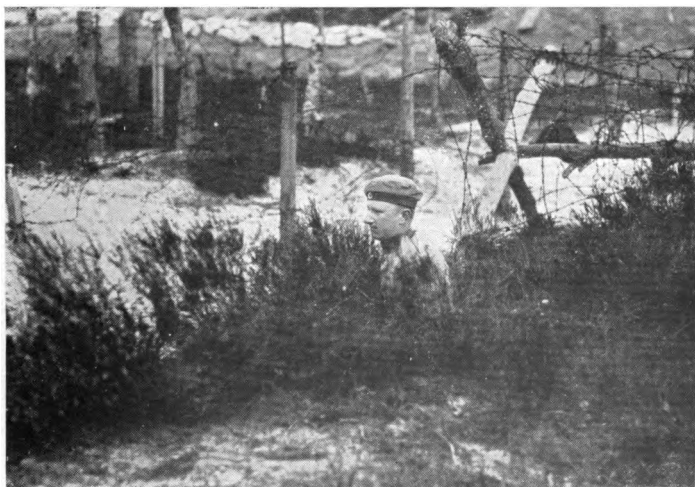
4. Hun as seen reflected in his own Periscope.



5. Hun looking through Periscope.



6. German Sniper camouflaged outside his own wire.



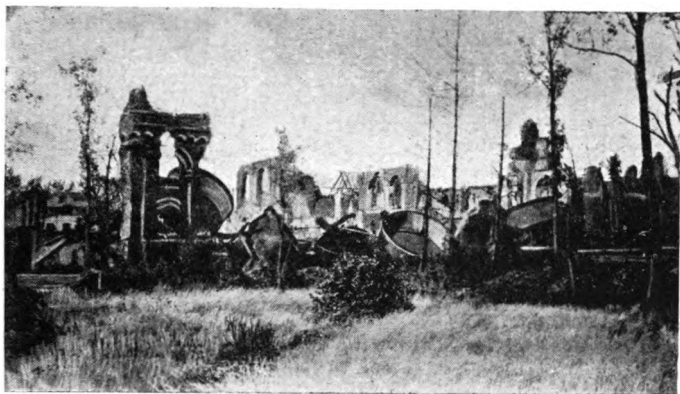
7. Look-out hole beyond wire of German trench.



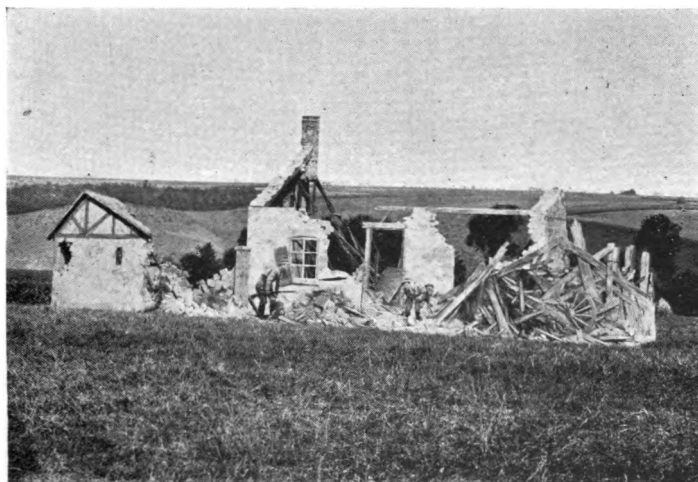
8. Close Quarters. The men used to get very keen on this and had to work mostly by sound.



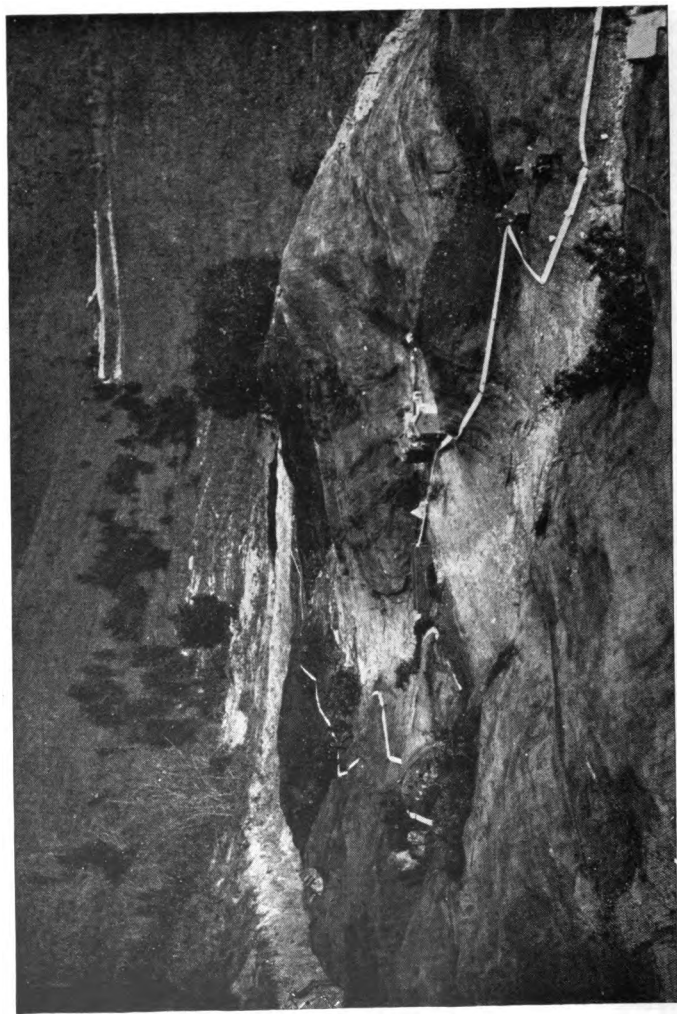
9. The Kit for Crawling. One represents German and one British.



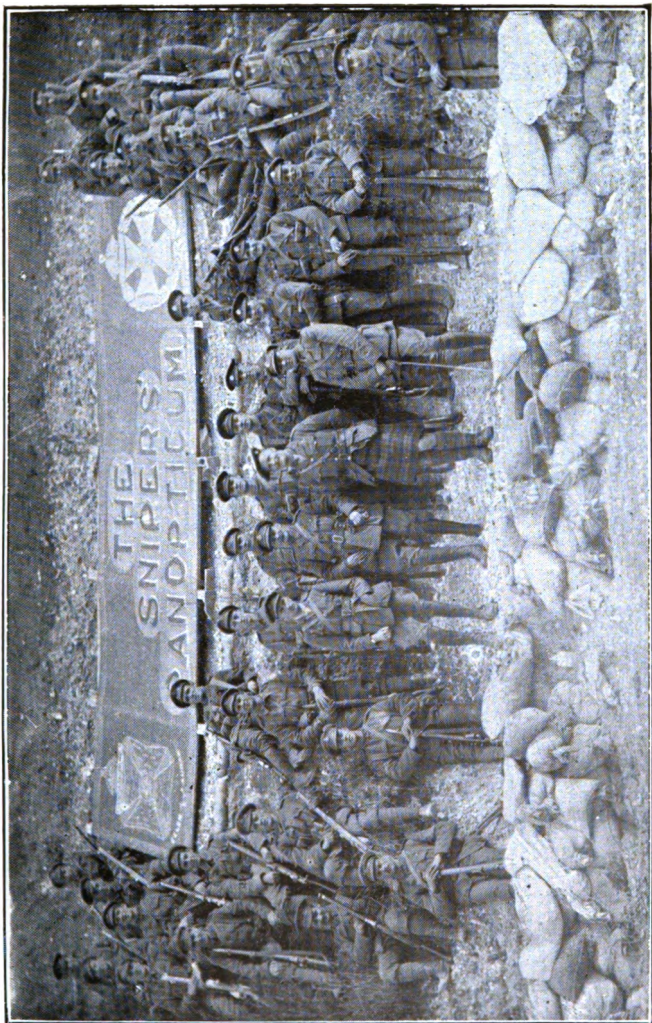
10. Ruins of Blangy, at Arras, 1916.



11. Movable Camouflage Farm and Bosch figures at Fourth Army Scouting and Sniping School at Bouchon, August 1917, made by Special Works Coy. R.E. at Amiens.



12. Model Landscape 10 yards by 10 yards. Scale 1:400. Houses exaggerated from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 2 inches. Roads $\frac{1}{2}$ inch tape. Constructed in one day. Used for War Games and Tactical Scouting Exercises to teach use of ground.



13. The Snipers' School, Acq., 1946. 60th K.R.R. and Rifle Brigade.



14. Imitation German trench and loophole. Acq.



15. Loophole in chalk parapet, front view. Acq.



**16. Demonstration Party of Young Soldiers at Bouchon,
Fourth Army Sniping School, 1917.**



17. Some of the Boys who keep smiling.

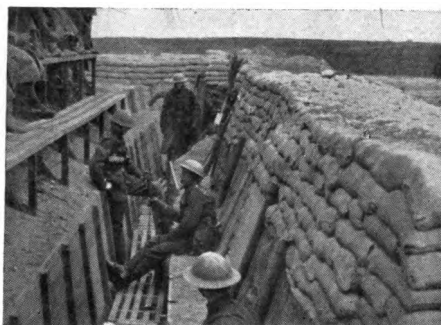
Cinema film, Colchester, 1918.



18. Capture of German prisoners on night patrol.



19. Keep Smiling—Jiu Jitsu Class.



**Teaching by Acting.
In the Trenches.**

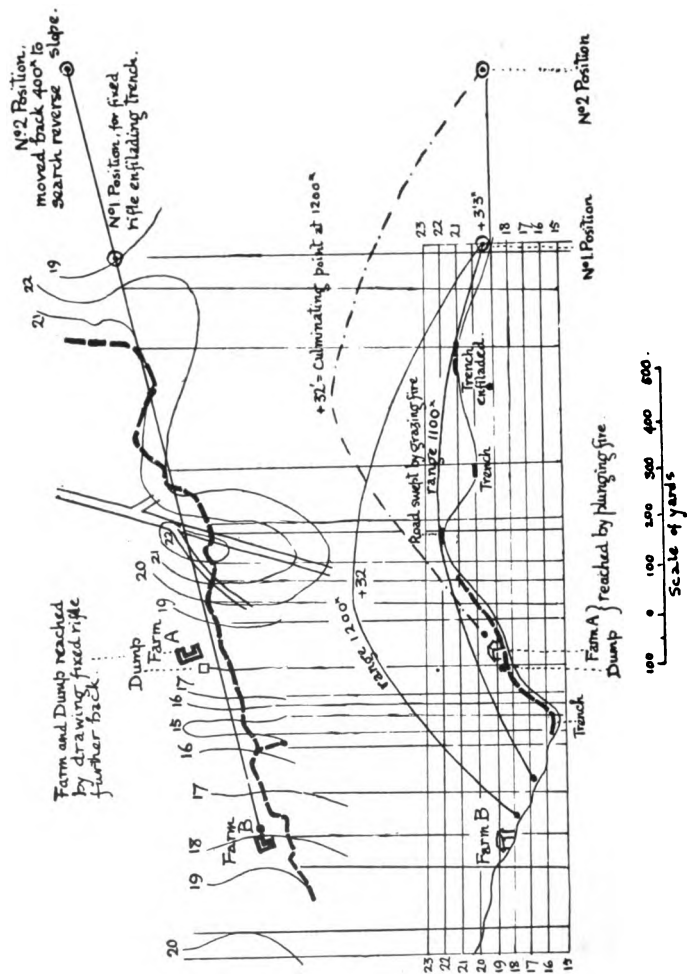


Snipers using decoy.



**Telescope and
Telephone in an
Observation Post.**

20. Scenes from Cinema films used for teaching.



Range Cards used by Snipers for fixed-rifles in the trenches.

INTRODUCTION TO APPENDICES.

THE following Appendices may be of interest and help to complete my story.

The first two may assist in the future training of Scouts for war. The third may help the Boy Scout Movement by persuading more men to come forward and lend a hand in the winning of peace and goodwill, and so securing the prevention of future wars.

APPENDIX I.

LECTURE AT ALDERSHOT.

Scouting.

December, 1916.

*To 150 Senior Officers, Aldershot. 19/12/16. Time,
1 hour—Lantern Slides.*

Whenever I met my Divisional Commander in France, he always greeted me in the same way: "Well," he used to say, "how many more Bosches have you killed to-day?" I used to take this as a compliment, for, after all, that is what we are in khaki for. Gentlemen, it is a great and a glorious thing to die—to be killed for your country, but it is a far more satisfactory thing to *live* for your country and to kill as many of its enemies as possible. The whole object of anything I may say or do during the next few days is to bring it about that more Bosches may be killed and more of our good fellows spared from casualties due to stupid mistakes and want of training. I do not mind whether you go away and say it was a good lecture or whether you say it was a rotten lecture (and heaven knows you must be expert judges by now!), the one thing I *do* care about is—that my object should be achieved.

I am going to start by asking each of you a question. "Do you hate the Bosche? Do you?" Well, that is what a young Brigadier asked me. "You can't get on unless you do." "Well," I said, "not exactly, though I know what you mean. You mean that in this serious business of killing you must strain every nerve." You must give your whole body and mind and spirit to it; but for a scout, at all events, hate may mean undue haste. If you are going to shoot a leopard you will do all you can to kill him; every art of the shikari will be brought into play; trouble, expense, danger, are not considered, but you do not hate the leopard even if it is a "man-eater"—even if, when you have shot him, you find inside him the mortal remains of some poor native woman, silver nose-ring and glass bangles all complete—even then you do not hate the leopard, he is vermin, and you were right to destroy him. So, too, it is with the Bosche. I make no bones about it; with me it is a sacred duty to do what in me lies to kill the Bosche, not because I would hurt one hair of his shaven head unnecessarily, but because that is the way to end and win this war.

Scouting and Sniping are a Side Show. The next point I wish to make is that Scouting, important as it is, is only a side show. It is the Infantry soldier who to-day, as at all times, is going to decide this war. It is in the attack that he will do it—that is, we must get him home with the bayonet, the bomb, or the knob-kerry. The Navy, the Air Service, the war of munitions, all the other departments and branches, indispensable as they are, are only

subsidiary. It is the Infantry soldier—the man stuck in the mud and sticking it out in the mud—the man who “ goes over the top ” and sticks it into the Hun—he is the hero of this war. All that he is taught from the day he learns to salute (and to salute as smartly as ever he can) to the time he is turned out as the finished article—all that you, his leaders, learn—all the lectures on tactics—law—interior economy—on how to keep smiling and on how to keep your doctor and your cook smiling ! all have but one object—to get the Infantry soldier home with the bomb, the bayonet, or the knob-kerry. You, gentlemen, who will shortly have command, 1,000 each of you, of these glorious fellows—you will give them your whole attention and affection, I know. I do not mean to distract you from it—but I want to focus your attention for a while on this side show of Scouting, so that you will go back interested, so that you will realise its importance, so that you will understand how to train your Scouts and, above all, so that you will encourage your Scout Officer and all his Scouts in a rôle which leads direct to the comfort and the success of the man in the trench.

Scouting. The difficulty about Scouting and Sniping
No regular is that there is no regular system. I re-
system. member the same disadvantage in 1903.

In that year I arrived in India, young and keen, and with some experience after the South African War. My first parade with my new Battalion was a field-day. My Company was advance-
1903. guard to the Battalion. The usual thing took

place. Hurry up—push out the advance guard—double out the Scouts. Very little scheme and no time for plans, etc. And the Scouts ! Old soldiers, three good-conduct rings, selected for a “ soft job ”—excused guards, fatigues, and Church parades. Off they went, and, of course, very soon there was trouble. “ Why the—! Who the—! Where the—! ” and indeed it *was* what General Kentish would call “ a bad show.” In due course it appeared in Brigade orders that the Scouts of the 60th Rifles did their side more harm than good. What an order to a Regiment which had won the motto of “ *Celer et audax* ” by a feat of good scouting under Wolfe on the St. Lawrence ! It was enough to make all past Riflemen turn in their graves. So we took up the matter and eventually, after two years, had established a system which worked well and which was taken up by others. In the Himalayas we had exceptional facilities. The men were away for weeks at a time. They worked with the Gurkhas and learned from them all they could of Scoutcraft and woodcraft and cunning. They stalked and shot and skinned and cooked and ate their own game, and in the end got a good name as Scouts. Then in the plains they worked with Sikhs, Brahmins, Punjabis and Pathans. These supplied the skill in finding the way, speaking the language, and excelled our men in ruses and cunning, while the Riflemen shone in signalling, reporting and, above all, in taking responsibility. On one occasion, working in groups of four (two native sepoys and two British Riflemen) 50 Scouts were able to watch 12 miles of country for

48 hours and stop a Cavalry Convoy getting through. During this time I learned something of the possibilities and something of the limitations of the average British soldier as a Scout. You cannot turn out a Baden-Powell or a Colquhoun-Grant or a Burnham, but you can produce a man who will score off the Bosche every time.

1914. Then came this war, and I was surprised to find when I got back to the Army that there was *still* no established system of training Scouts—
The Need. and yet the need has grown more patent every day of the war.

I will not dwell on the opening stages of the war. I will only remind you of one example common to us all—the fight at Meteren.

Recall to your minds the situation. A German rear-guard, fulfilling the function of a rear-guard, had caused a British Brigade to deploy and so had gained time for the force it covered. It might have gained still longer, but for a bit of good scouting (I do not refer to scouting for protection, which is quite distinct and which, perhaps, may call for the employment of your stupidest instead of your best men).

I am going to pay the Commandant a compliment. In my opinion he was nothing more or less on that occasion than *a good Scout*. There he was at Meteren on the left flank—the man who knew the situation—the man with an eye for ground and an instinct for war. He saw what was wanted, sent back word and so time and lives were saved.

Trench Warfare. Then we come to the period of trench warfare, the high-water mark of open warfare.

It is here that the Sniper comes to the fore, but in sniping, before you can hit your man you must be able to find him, and that is Scouting—good scouting therefore comes first. But this trench warfare may be in widely different countries. It may be in places such as Sanctuary Wood, where it was possible to crawl among the bushes right up to the enemy trenches in broad daylight. It may be among the ruined breweries and iron-foundries of the suburbs of Arras where, if a man knew how to do it, he could climb to points of vantage and look down on the Bosche who was not 10 yards away and seldom more than 30. You may be in normal trenches at distances from 100 to 300 yards, or you may be at such great distances that patrols can go out scouting by day—and again you may be scouting in the semi-open warfare on the Somme. In all these various conditions scouting, patrolling and sniping come to the fore.

If you look at the first pages of the printed notes I have issued you will see the headings under which a Scout should be trained. I have given the matter careful thought, and do not think you will find anything left out.

But, in France, you will not get time to give your Scouts this complete training, therefore I am limiting this course to the three most important heads: Scouting, Patrolling and Sniping. We hope to give one day to each, and you will find in the printed notes hints for training your Scouts for a week—(or more if you can)—in each of these subjects.

Importance of Scouting. One of my objects is to interest you in the need for Scouting. I want to impress on you the value of Scouting (1) for protection ; (2) for information.

For protection. *With regard to protection* it seems so obvious—so obvious that it is better one man should “go up” than four, better four than 40, better a whole advance guard than the main body, that it would seem unnecessary to dwell on it, and yet, in all wars we find instances of neglect in the ordinary precautions which have proved fatal. Look at the three-fold knock in the early days of the South African War. Majersfontein on the left, in the darkness ; Stormberg in the centre, at dawn ; and Colenso on the right, in broad daylight ; all disasters due to faulty Scouting.

For information. *But it is the value of information* in war which I want chiefly to impress on you.

“Nothing,” said Napoleon, “gives one greater courage, nothing clears one’s ideas better, than to know the position of the enemy.” Simple and obvious, you say, and yet you cannot realise it too clearly. Let us look at the Franco-German War of 1870. The very day that war was declared masses of German cavalry, who had been toeing the line along the frontier, were launched across the border. Every village was flooded by Uhlans ; at the sight of their long lances and black and white pennons, men, women, children, dogs, chickens, all fled in every direction ; the Troopers rode, unopposed, up to the

Franco-German War of 1870.

Mayors' houses and commandeered food and forage and, most important of all, got the information they wanted. This information, collected all along the front, collated and sifted, was finally placed in a clear and concise form before the great Von Moltke. Moltke was the man *with information* ; Moltke was the man who could see. On he went from victory to victory, and moving three large armies like clockwork. Paris was soon surrounded.

And the French ? What, indeed, would Murat or Marbot or any of the great Napoleon's cavalry leaders have said of the ignorant, untrained troopers of the stumour Napoleon ! Not a word of reliable information reached Bazaine. Bazaine was the man *without information*. Bazaine was blind, blind as a bat, blind as Bartimeus.

Crushing defeat after crushing defeat, whole armies and garrisons cut off, surrounded, surrendered. One Emperor, three Field-Marschals, and thousands of officers and men led captive into Germany. Then there came a change. It became a " People's War." Read Colonel Lonsdale Hale and see what happened. The people rose, every copse and farm and village might hold some franc-tireur ; it was no longer safe for the Uhlans to ride about in small numbers. The peasants allowed themselves to be shot down like dogs rather than give one word of information ; the iron cross was offered for any useful information, but *no information* came in, and at once we see the result. Doubt, hesitation, marches and counter-marches, discontent in the ranks and quarrels in high places.

Moltke could get no sleep, and so serious at one time had things become that the old King William, grandfather of "big Willie," he too, like our "little Willie" of to-day, had packed up his looted goods and chattels at the Palace of Versailles, and was on the point of raising the siege of Paris and retiring back to Germany.

And again Then the Germans had a lucky day—two in Sept., pieces of paper were picked up, and one 1917. talkative French officer was captured.

The fog of war was lifted and *Moltke could see again*. Chanzy, Bourbaki and others were wiped off the board and Paris fell.

To-day. Great changes have taken place in war since then. We had been told by Bernhardt and other cavalry leaders that it was the cavalry who would get us the information. We had puzzled and passed exams. for promotion in cavalry duties—Independent Cavalry—Protective Cavalry—strategical patrols, tactical and combat patrols, and what not—but what do we find? It is our wonderful flying men who, first and foremost, get us the information. We have learned a great deal of their wonderful progress in lectures during this course; of the great struggle which is going on for superiority in the air; of the contest between Bosche brains and British brains as to which shall build the fastest machines, as to which shall turn out the most skilful and daring airmen—all we ground mortals can do is to take our hats off to them and wish our gallant Flying Corps good luck. The work going on has been a revelation to me at any rate—but, gentlemen, does not the very

magnitude of the effort being made impress on us all the *vast importance* of information in war.

Go back to your Scouts and let them know of these things—buck them up and encourage them—encourage this and *all* your side-shows—let them know the importance of their work. Tell your Scouts that the more keen, trained eyes there are watching, watching ceaselessly, all along our front—the greater our chance of success. Tell them that nothing is too small for a Scout to notice, and that even a man who observes a flock of sparrows rising on some enemy parapet, or a rabbit grazing at some forward sap, may be doing far more than he knows to prove the truth of Napoleon's maxim—"Nothing clears one's ideas better." Think of that, Scout! Clearing the ideas of Napoleon, the biggest brain that ever thought of war, by seeing a flock of sparrows! "Nothing gives greater courage"—think of it, Scout! You giving courage to the lion-hearted Haig—by reporting a timid rabbit at a forward sap. How? Because these are clues which, put together all along the line, help to tell "*the position of the enemy.*"

I have let myself go and talked too much, but I want to *rub in* the importance of information in war.

Training. Next I want to interest you in the training.

Have you got a *system* of training your Battalion Scouts? Have you got a good Scout Officer? Is he keen? If not, go back and get them going. You will find in the printed booklet all that you need to help you—read it, and then post it to your Scout

Officer and tell him if he has not read it by the time you turn up there will be trouble.

But then your training depends on the time available, and on the nature of the trenches you go to. What do you want your Scouts to do? Are you in a place where sniping is prevalent—or where patrolling is specially important—or are there good openings for observation? You will have to confer with your Scout Officer and make a plan. You will find in your printed notes a syllabus of what to teach.

What to teach. The more you can tell your Scouts about tactics, Advance Guards, Flank Guards,

Tactics. Rear Guards, Outposts, Attack and Defence, and Marching the better. Let them have any information about the enemy's methods which comes your way. When you have any conference of N.C.O's to explain matters, include your Scouts, bring them on as intelligent, all-round men and keep them up-to-date. You will find some of them have an instinct for war.

How to get there and how to get back.

This is perhaps the most important heading of all—for it includes the question of formations, ground, visibility, tracking and cunning.

(Formations.—Baden-Powell and Spearman System on the screen). For teaching the eye for ground you will find one or two suggestions in the Notes.

Visibility. Let your Scout Officer make his teaching interesting. For instance, in teaching visibility or cunning let him tell his Scouts of lessons from Natural history. Tell them of the South Kensington

Museum ; if at home why not take his Scouts there, and show them the case, for instance, where examples are given of protective or aggressive colouring, of warning colours and mimicry. Show them the butterflies with wings folded looking exactly the same as the leaves on the branch, or the moths, brown on the bark or grey on the lichen, or the caterpillars like sticks and twigs, and insects like thorns. Or show them the ptarmigan, more green in summer, hoary in autumn and turning white with the snow in winter, or the caddis worm hiding himself by collecting materials from his surroundings. Tell them of the sole, or the cuttlefish which changes its colour and clouds over its outline in the sand or mud. Tell them of the hen pheasant or partridge with their mottled neutral colouring, sitting so still and invisible on their nests, till you catch sight of a bright eye, and of how the partridge covers up its nest before leaving. Tell them of the plover or curlew trying to mislead you as to the whereabouts of its eggs of the difficulty of seeing eggs and young birds even when found. Tell them of the lark or the partridge pretending to be winged, or the sandpiper ventriloquising—start ideas in their heads. They never have thought of such things before. Ask them what kind of a nest a cuckoo builds—anything to start them thinking. It will pay you some day.

Read them accounts of good scouting work. You could not do better than read some bits from Buchan's *Thirty-nine Steps* or *Greenmantle*, or *Sherlock Holmes* and such like books.

Tracking, too. I will show you a simple practice which the men get very keen about.

What to look for and how to look.

Teach them to look for *movement* and *change*. Teach them the use and care of glasses and telescopes. Train them, too, as suggested in the Notes, to memorise what they have seen, to describe things clearly and to point them out quickly to others.

Fighting. As a rule a Scout avoids fighting, but it may happen that he will have to fight to get his information or to get back with information gained.

This implies *Skirmishing*. A Scout must be a good skirmisher, and that alone is a big subject.

Skirmishing is not learned in a day. Your skirmisher may be working alone, or he may be co-operating with others. He may be advancing or retiring ; he may be attacking or defending or shooting, but there is one rule for all skirmishers. He must present the smallest possible target for the shortest possible time, while at the same time doing his utmost to carry out the task in hand. If you are attacking—go in and win ; make up your mind to get there—but show yourself as little as possible. If you are defending, hang on and stick it. Swear that nothing shall turn you out alive—but show yourself as little as possible. If you are shooting, remember all you have been taught of judging the distance, adjusting the sights, of holding and aiming and pressing the trigger—but all the time show yourself as little as possible. And then—when you have taught your man these things—

when he has learned to extend at once at the signal, to make the best of the ground, to throw himself down at the best place in conformation with others, not crowding, not masking the fire, not losing direction—when he has learned all these things—how do you ensure when left to himself, with no one to order him on, with bullets whistling past or striking the ground in front, with shells and shrapnel and noise—there is something which is going to make him go on? It is *Discipline*—not the old fashioned pipe-clay periwig discipline of Braddock or Frederick the Great—but the discipline of Wolfe, of Sir John Moore, of our infantry of to-day—the discipline which, besides unhesitating obedience and smartness on parade, includes something of the “thinking bayonet,” Intelligence, and with it a high sense of duty. I tell you all this because so many forget how much there is to be taught.

Patrols Then there is the question far too often **fighting**. neglected—Your Scout goes out on patrol.

You have sent him out into “No Man’s Land” with some definite mission. He meets a Bosche. They come to grips. What training have you given your man in dealing with an opponent under such conditions? Surely it is unfair to give them no previous training. Put two men with gloves on into the ring—one with training—the other without. Which will have the greater confidence? Which will win? It is extraordinary to my mind that men are sent out every night along our front, with no attempt at training them—either at scouting, finding the way, or fight-

ing their opponent in the dark. I am going to show you a method of training patrols by day for night work, with dark spectacles on, and then Sergt. Nuttall (better known as Osaka, a jiu-jitsu expert) is going to demonstrate various ways of dealing with an opponent on patrol. I feel certain that most Battalions have some man who can help their scouts with some wrestling or jiu-jitsu or other tricks which would help them on patrol.

Reports and Messages and Compass.

I will only say here that your scouts must be well trained, for as Scouts, as Patrols, and as Snipers, good reports are important.

Night In night work again we have a big subject.
Work. It comes into Scouting, especially in patrolling.

You will find the matter mentioned in the printed notes under both these heads. I will only ask you this: Have you ever, on some still night, stood beside one of your sentries and talked to him quietly and taught him to *listen*? The first thing probably is to *shift* some hero snoring close by. That done, you whisper: "Now, sentry, let's listen together." You look at your man, just out from home perhaps, a home very likely of pavements and picture palaces. To such a man the stillness, the rustle of a leaf, a branch creaking, or even a bush not moving at all, might be a cause of panic.

Then you hear across "No-Man's-Land" the clink of a shovel or pick, or the muffled sound of a mawl—and guttural voices—then all is still. You discuss the

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sounds below your breath, and while you speculate as to numbers, direction, and Bosches, with perhaps a word about leave and home, you hear the sound of the rolling of trollies or rumble of waggons and perhaps some girders dropped at some dump, and then, far off, the puffing of a train. You may hear the splash of baling water or the stamping of cold feet. You talk of these things and make him listen and put himself in the Bosche's place and THINK.

And so you teach your man to listen. Perhaps you win a friend, for, before you go, you may have said a word which just makes all the difference and gives him an outlook and object in life. To the man who has ears to hear, a partridge calling in "No-Man's-Land," or the cry of birds disturbed—has each its story to tell. But the untrained man is deaf. The untrained man hears nothing. He is unprepared—and so may be a source of danger and panic. We hear of listening schools for mining companies—why do we not employ our Scouts in teaching sentries to listen ?

Scouts as I would use my Scouts to help in teaching
an Intelli- others. In the trenches, for instance, I
gence De- would encourage them to give the Sentries
partment. an interest in what there is in front of them.

Let them have a look through their periscopes or glasses and tell them what to look for. I would use them for spreading useful or encouraging information among the rank and file, and wisely used your Scouts may keep you informed of things happening which a Commanding, or Company,

Officer is the better for knowing. I do not hint at any form of spying, but I say that, *wisely used*, your Scouts may be a valuable means of keeping touch.

The right spirit. And now to finish I wish to say a word about the spirit which we are to put into our Scouts. What is the spirit which wins, and how are we to foster it?

The Boy Scouts. For three years before this war began I was a Leader of 20,000 and more Boy Scouts in Scotland. Grand Scouts they were, so quick and keen to learn all that I could teach them about Scouting; but I was chiefly concerned with putting into them what we called the Scout spirit—something of what we call the public school spirit, which makes a boy play up and play the game for his side: something of what we call *esprit de corps*, which makes men do great deeds for their Regiment, forgetting themselves—and very much of what we call patriotism. When a little chap joined the Boy Scouts he stood up before his elder comrades and held his hand up at the Scouts' salute, and he made this solemn threefold promise:

"I will try to do my duty to God."

"I will do my best to help others."

"I will obey the Scout Law."

Their code was to keep smiling—to stick it—to do their duty and, indeed, to "quit themselves as men." Then came this war, and we found that the seed we had sown brought forth fruit a thousandfold.

The very day that war was declared every Scout who could, joined up for service at once, and those who were too small to join up helped in a hundred and one ways.

Two days after war was declared we received a telegram at 10 a.m. asking us if we could find Scouts to help with Coast Guard work. At 10.30 p.m. that night we were able to telegraph that all the stations on the East Coast of Scotland had been found, each with a party of one Scoutmaster, one Patrol-Leader, and seven Scouts, tents, cooking-pots, rations and blankets complete.

And even now, to-day, there are still some 20,000 and more, in Scotland alone, toeing the line and counting the days till they, too, may be allowed to put on khaki.

If you are going to train boys or men you must develop the body, the mind, and the spirit, and chiefly the spirit—for the spirit directs.

Here at Aldershot we have seen the body trained, and nothing could be finer than the gymnastic school (especially, I think, the bayonet fighting).

As to the mind, you know all about it. Our brains are bursting with knowledge.

But what of the spirit? What kind of spirit do we want, and how are we fostering it?

We must have enthusiasm. We must have keenness. Without it you cannot win a game of ping-pong, and *we* are up against the greatest war that ever was. But keenness on what? What spirit will win? Is it the spirit of hate?

I think that we, with such a cause, can safely leave the "hymn of hate" to the Hun. *We* will foster and cherish the old-established British soldier-virtues of courage, devotion and self-sacrifice.

Let us inspire our men with the wish for all that is good and true and noble and right.

Let them know and make them feel—not, perhaps, in so many words—but you know what I mean—without any cant, or swank, or buck—just let them know they are crusaders in a great crusade.

I have felt that in this course, throughout the training, our Leader has been leading direct to the spirit which wins—for throughout the teaching the keynote in every subject taught has been *Sympathy between Leaders and Men*—and this with Self-Sacrifice is the spirit which wins.

F.M.C.

APPENDIX II.

FINAL RESULTS OF EXPERIENCE

Course of Scout Training of 5th K.R.R. at Sheerness.

March, 1918.

REPORT

ON SYSTEM OF TRAINING SCOUTS.

5TH BATTALION, KING'S ROYAL RIFLE CORPS.

21/3/18.

Original Class.—Consisting of 24 men—Course lasting 14 days (12 working days)—Syllabus (A) attached.

Twelve best Scouts receive further training of seven days and are graded, according to results of various tests, as "Section Scouts," 1st and 2nd Class—75 per cent. and 60 per cent.

Subsequent Classes to consist of 12 new men—one new hand attached to each trained Scout, who is held partly responsible for the training,—12 days' syllabus (B) attached.

The trained Scouts receive extra training in map-reading, compass and reporting, and are encouraged to work for promotion to "Company Scout," 1st and 2nd Class.

The Training is based on SS 195.

Each Scout keeps a *note-book* and is encouraged to refer to his notes before being tested in any subject.

Prizes allotted for best note-book, best Scout, and best Group.

The men are all "trained young soldiers," and are volunteers, the trained Scouts being encouraged themselves to look out for suitable men.

Shooting conducted by Scout Officer with assistance of Musketry Staff. Special attention to testing rifles, zeroing, snap-shooting and fire, combined with movement and use of ground.

Model.—The training of an eye for ground, and in map-reading, is facilitated by use of model.

The quick eye for an enemy is trained by use of painted figures of Germans and of men in German uniform.

Night Work—The use of black goggles has proved of the greatest value.

Cinema lectures at local Cinema with lantern slides and educational cinema scouting films.

Demonstration by Acting.—Training fitted in as convenient.

Jiu-Jitsu.—P. & B.T. staff teach methods of hand-to-hand fighting and crawling.

Movable "Pill Box."—In practising scouting both by day and night, the use of camouflage "pill-box" has been found of assistance.

Demonstration.—After 12 days' training, the class were fit to give instructive demonstrations for Young Officers, etc. For this purpose they are always available and can be used with but little interruption to their training.

Results.—The interest taken and the progress made by the men has been most satisfactory. In twelve days with this intensive system of training, it is possible to give an average man a working knowledge of all the duties of a Section Scout. To perfect him, practice only is required, and whether he is called upon later to act as a Scout or not, the training he has received is certain to make him a more efficient and reliable soldier.

After the retreat of the Germans to the Hindenburg Line, 1917, there was an outcry for the training of Scouts. One of the objects of SS 195 was to meet this demand. The training given at Sheerness is probably the first organised effort to carry out the training of the Scouts of a Platoon on the lines laid down in SS 195, and is therefore of interest. It would seem especially suitable for young soldiers who have undergone six months' training, and who still have some months to complete 19 years.

SYLLABUS.

Twelve Days' Course for Scouts.

1	15.2.18. FRID.	8.30 to 9.30. Organise groups and pairs. Issue note-books and clothes and maps. Lecture. Uses and duties of Scouts.	9.30 to 12. Miniature Range. Testing and fitting rifles. Grouping & application. Care of arms, etc.	2 to 4.30. Range. Grouping 200 yards. Application 200 yards.
2	16.2.18. SAT.	8.30 to 9.30. Lecture. Use of ground. Fire combined with movement.	Range. Grouping. 200 yards Application smaller target.	Grouping 300 yards. Application
3	18.2.18. MOND.	8.30 to 9.30. Lecture. Scouting. The quick eye. Stalking. Use of ground.	Range. Snapshooting.	Range. Moving targets.
4	19.2.18. TUES.	8.30 to 9.30. Lecture. Observation.	Practice. Practice in Scouting and Observation.	2 p.m. 3.15. Compass. Jiu Jitsu.
5	20.2.18. WED.	8.30. Lecture. Reporting.	Practice.	2 p.m. 3.15. Map-reading. Jiu Jitsu.

6	21.2.18. THURS.	8.30. Lecture. Map-reading. Finding the way.	Practice.	2 p.m. Lecture general.	3.15. Jiu Jitsu.
7	22.2.18. FRID.	8.30. Lecture. Model. Formations in open country. Working in groups, etc.	Day out: haversack rations. Practice open warfare Scouting.		
8	23.2.18. SAT.	8.30. Lecture. Night work.	Practice. Black goggles. Jiu Jitsu (4).	Afternoon off. 6.30 p.m. Practice night-work.	
9	25.2.18. MOND.	8.30. Ditto.	Practice. Black goggles. Jiu Jitsu (6).	Ditto.	
10	26.2.18. TUES.	Practice in Scouting, Scout Sniper, Observer and Runner. Rehearse and carry out with ball.			
11	27.2.18. WED.	Recapitulation as required.			
12	28.2.18. THURS.	Examination.			
Map-reading Compass, Reporting J.D. and Jiu Jitsu carried out during Course as opportunities occur.					

DEMONSTRATION

TO OFFICERS OF THE BRIGADE. THURSDAY, 7.3.18.

- 10 a.m. Lecture. Celer et Audax Club.
- 10.30 a.m. Demonstration of training of "the quick eye" on the way to training ground at NABOTH'S VINEYARD.
- 10.50 a.m. Example of good skirmishing. "Sergt. Chapman wins the V.C." at NABOTH'S VINEYARD.
11. 0 a.m. Example of bad skirmishing.
- 11.15 a.m. Example of night patrols. Three kinds of patrols. Reconnaissance of pill-box located by compass by day. Intelligence Officer reconnoitres by night—finds working party—sends for Lewis Gun and strafes wiring party. Working party covered by Bosche patrol.
- 12 noon Jiu Jitsu.
- 12.15 p.m. Any Officers' practice as desired with black goggles or any stunt by Scouts as desired—*e.g.*, Education by acting.

INTERVAL.

- 1.30 p.m. Use of model for teaching open warfare scouting; use of ground; map reading; indication of targets, etc., at RABBIT HUTCH.

Note.—Demonstration by young soldier Scouts after 10 days' course of training as "Section Scouts."

Officers intending to crawl should wear old clothes. If ground is wet, the programme is subject to alteration.

(Signed) F. M. CRUM, *Major,*
5th Battn. K.R.R. Corps.

SHEERNESS. 6/3/18.

LETTER FROM O.C. 5TH BATT. K.R.R.C.

March, 1918.

Major F. M. CRUM, 5th Battn. King's Royal Rifles, did excellent work for the Battalion under my command during February and March, 1918, by organising and demonstrating a system of intense training of Scouts in a 12-days' Course. He also introduced into the Battalion his system of training with the aid of the cinema, sand models, education by acting, black goggles for training men in night work by day, jiu-jitsu, etc. I consider these methods, which he has originated, invaluable assets towards turning out efficient soldiers, as also is his work on Scouting, SS 195.

U. S. U. PARKER-JERVIS, *Lt.-Col.*
Cmdg. 5/K.R.R.C.

SHEERNESS.

Nov. 1918.

APPENDIX III.

WORK WITH BOY SCOUTS.

July, 1918 to July, 1919.

IN the course of my Army lectures in Scotland, from July 15th to August 2nd, 1918, during which over 7,000 officers and men were lectured to, with Edinburgh and Stirling as my bases, I was able to do a bit for the Scouts as well.

There was much to be done. Lawrence and Stocks and many of our best leaders had been killed, and others were away at the war. There were very few with time to help and very many things to be seen to. The Coast-Watching Scouts, the passing of the "Scottish Constitution" and other matters were leading to mistakes, misunderstandings and friction. In August I was able to visit the Coastguard Stations from Aberdeen to Berwick and found our boys doing splendid work.

On August 6th I sent out a printed circular, calling for a new start—it led to some trouble, there were things that were wrong, and I lived in a hurry those days.

On September 28th we held an important meeting at Stirling. This meeting was a turning point in the Boy Scout movement in Scotland. It went off

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with a fine spirit, which lasted all day and was well maintained on the following Sunday. There was a good rally of 500 Stirlingshire boys with some 12 County flags. In my diary I see this note—7/8/1918: “For the whole of the last month my mind has been one steady prayer for the success of this meeting . . . applied for leave to retire from the Army, and went to bed at 9.30 p.m. tired out.”

On my release from the Army in November my one thought was to get on with Boy Scout work in Scotland. The ball had been set rolling—a capable and energetic committee took matters in hand and did great work, but it was not till May, 1919, that I was back once more with my Scouts, training for camp. Two extracts dealing with “Peace Day,” 28th June, 1919, and “Victory Day,” 19th July, 1919, may not be out of place. They tell of happier days and show that in the end the sun comes shining through the worst of storms.

Diary of a *Peace Day, Saturday, 28th June, 1919.*
Practice 9.30 a.m.—Three patrols, each in separate tent, each with its own kitchen and equipment, camped at Viewforth. Patrol Leaders make their own arrangements as to rations, after consulting boys of their patrols. Each patrol cooks the dinner selected for its first day on cooking duty in the coming “Victory Camp,” but for 8 Scouts, instead of for 30. Special attention to washing and drying dixies.

2 p.m. to 5 p.m.—Scouts assisted Girl Guides at their Fête.

6 p.m.—The great news received. *Peace signed*. Camp fire. First night in camp, and great goings on. Late turning in, but in good time Sunday morning.

Sunday, 29th June.—Routine as in Camp Orders.

11 a.m.—Marched St. Ninian's Church (2½m.) with trek cart and rations. Special word to Scouts from Rev. R. McDonald.

1 p.m.—Dinner at Beaton's Mill, where we read the story of the fate of King James III, and then to Auchenbowie (4m.). Met Torwood Troop at "Scouts' Own," tea, games, return to Stirling 9 p.m.

Monday, 30th June.—7 a.m.—Reveille. Breakfast : porridge, sausages, tea, bread, and jam, all over by 9.30 a.m.

Camp cleared up, dixies left clean, and equipment handed in by 12 noon. Dinner at home.

This practice camp made the boys think for themselves, and carry out what they had been learning in June. On the Leaders fell the responsibility of feeding 8 boys and of meeting the cost. They learned to refer to the instructions given them as to feeding, kit, etc., while if anything had been forgotten the Scout could fetch it from home, or the nearest shop. The cooks had practice in estimating quantities, and gained confidence. Most of the boys were new to camp, but they did splendidly and made great strides.

"Victory Day," Then came the "Victory Camp" **19th July, 1919.** on the Gareloch in July, and with it "Victory Day," 19th July, 1919, and the great rejoicings with which we wound up the war, and truly I do not think that even London

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itself, with all its millions, and all its historic processions, produced more happiness than *our* two weeks at Achnashie—"the field of peace."

Letter to *Scout H.Q. Gazette*, September, 1919.

A Victory Camp. Two glorious weeks of Camping and sunshine, of shorts and shirt sleeves!

But who can thoroughly run a Scout Camp and completely enjoy it if he has to write notes and letters, even to brother Scouts, however lenient? There were Camps in every direction all round us. Scouts, Cadets, B.B., and Girl Guides. Perhaps as a Chief Scout's Commissioner, I should have visited some of them, but as a Scoutmaster, every minute was taken up, and my brother Scoutmasters will fully understand I had only time to wish them and all campers as good a time as we had ourselves.

What a lot there is to think of and prepare beforehand! What a lot one learns each day! What a wonderful thing a first-class, well-run Camp of good Scouts can be when pitched on the shores of some beautiful Scottish loch, and when Scotland for once forgets to rain, and celebrates victory with a spell of unprecedented holiday weather.

What other movement can combine so perfect a holiday with such practical individual training in manliness, handiness, and every variety of useful occupation?

Take, for instance, our first day. Entraining at Stirling for Balloch, we detrained and marched eight miles along the bonny banks of Loch Lomond, and

over the moors to Helensburgh where, unloading our trek-carts and taking them to pieces, we shipped them to Rosneath. By 8 p.m. the Scouts were settled down in Camp, and the Scout Patrol on cooking duty had provided the evening meal. Thus we had had practice in travel by road and rail and boat, the boys doing all for themselves, and earning praise from station-masters, porters, and pier-masters for their handiness.

Pleased with my first day, but tired, I turned in at 11 p.m. They tell me one bugle call went at 12 midnight, but such things do happen on first nights in Camp. As usual, no difficulty about reveille, for the Scout is always up before the lark the first morning in Camp. If you hustle a bit the first few mornings and help the new hands, things will go well the rest of the Camp. Blankets are shaken and tents aired, a biscuit issued, breathing exercises and a short run, a wash, and breakfasts up by 8.30 a.m. A good start is half the battle.

On the second morning, do not worry if things seem slack and unscoutlike. If you get them off, well turned out and in time for church, that, to my mind, is quite good. Get them away from Camp on Sunday if you can, and do not shock those who might think you are breaking the Sabbath. With us, we took our rations, and spent a happy day after service, breaking endless bottles and bombarding tin pots in the sea, away from the public gaze, along the shore to Rosneath Point. We returned in time for supper and a closing service round the flagstaff.

Who that has heard Scouts singing Poyser's Scout

Hymn and "Abide with Me," the hills silhouetted in black and the full moon lighting up the loch, will ever forget it? In sowing such memories, you are planting true love of country.

By the fourth day all should be running smoothly and with system. Fatigues for milk, firewood, latrines, a roster for boating and fishing; inter-tent and cooking competitions in full swing.

Reveille. If you are a sound sleeper, take an alarm clock, but with me, always a poor sleeper, it is no great hardship to act as alarm clock.

Indeed, it is yet another wonderful memory to have looked out and watched the dawn and to remember the sights and sounds of a lochside Camp in the small hours. The hills reflected as in a mirror. The lapping of the waters. The gulls, the first to sound the birds' reveille, the splash of the tern as he dives, the cry of the curlew wading at low tide.

Then the time comes to harden your heart, and wake your young cooks. Without this experience no Scoutmaster's education is complete. You start by unlacing the tent, and crawl in, and see some eight sleeping bundles of blankets. Which particular bundles are the cooks for to-day? This one with the cord tied to its leg. You pull, watch the expression as the situation dawns and he realises he is next for duty. That is the time if a Scout keeps smiling! Yes, and looks friendly, in spite of your unwelcome intrusion.

Half an hour later the piper on duty turns out from the Bulldog tent and strikes up "Hey Johnny

Cope"; beckon him up to the very door of the rival Hounds' tent, and watch—watch them turn over and stretch. Do they love the Highland music or do they think of throwing a boot at the piper's head? It is not a bad moment to study character.

Eventful Truly with us it *was* a Victory Camp.

Days. We seemed at every turn to be hauling in happy memories. The huge bonfire 400 feet above Rosneath Point. The trek to it with camp kettle and trek-cart. The blaze of the sun setting north-west above the Loch Long peaks, the evening lights, the views of the Clyde, the cocoa and Camp-fire sing-song just before the 30 feet bonfire was lit at 11 p.m., and then what a magnificent blaze—the cheers and pipers and crowds and the neighbouring bonfires on distant heights. The moon in its last quarter, rising east at midnight, and then the march home, with our pipers striding surefooted down the braes and through the bracken, on past "Adam and Eve," and along the Gareloch side in the moonlight, the Scouts swinging along the road and singing Poyser's marching songs with one good will.

Then there was Parents' Day, with acting and Scout games, our host and padre, the Rev. J. McL. Campbell, M.C., and Mrs. Campbell, doing all in their power to give us a good time.

There was Scouting on the moors, four escaped Huns being run to ground near Peaton House, where another branch of the Campbell clan entertained us. There were sports in the old Yew Avenue, and

visits from Commissioners and Scoutmasters, and each day the Flag ceremony would start with a simple service conducted by our beloved padre, short, simple talks about hills and home and country and friendship, and always we opened by singing the old Scottish favourite:

“ I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid.”

Then the last night, the bonfire on the shore, the still evening and glorious scene of hills and loch and boys ; the rousing sing-song ; the huge tree towed across the bay and hauled up after great exertions. Then it was getting late—11.15 p.m., and much to be done next day. I was thinking of closing, but it was the boys themselves who did it for me. How did they do it ? They were singing “ John Brown’s cuddy has an indiarubber nose ” with extra vigour ; gradually it merged into Poyser’s Scout Hymn, ‘ Come, all my comrades,’ and this in turn gave place to “ Abide with Me,” and ended with “ God Save the King.”

That was my great reward. It was the boys themselves who “ carried on.”

I never saw a scene more beautiful or felt so much impelled to say that God was in it all.

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